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ABSTRACT

This document consists of the two issues published during 1998 of the newsletter of the Japan Association for Language Teaching (JALT) national special interest group (N-SIG) on foreign language literacy. Major articles in these issues are: "Academic Protocol and Targeted Rhetoric" (Denise D. Brown); "Key Concepts in FL Literacy: Phonemic Awareness" (Charles Jannuzi); "Grammar, Reading, and Listening Skills among Japanese Students of English: A Comparison of Respective Abilities" (Bern Mulvey); "Literacy Links: Phonology, Phonetics, Phonemic Awareness and Phonics" (Jannuzi); "Specialty Booksellers on the WWW" (Jannuzi); and presentations from the 1997 JALT meeting, including: "FL Literacy: Meeting Needs and Realities in Japan" (panel discussion) (Andy Barfield, David Dycus, Barry Mateer, Elin Melchior); "Phonemic Awareness: Is It Really Language Specific?" (Brett Reynolds); "A Key Concept Revisited: Phonemic Awareness" (Jannuzi); "The Internet TESL Journal" (Dycus); and "Report on the Robert Kaplan Workshop" (Brown). Book and materials reviews are included in each issue. (MSE)

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Literacy Across Cultures

異文化リテラシイ

February, 1998 Volume 2, Number 1

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Academic Protocol and Targeted Rhetoric

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Links to Literacy

insights

It Is Written...

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Our Statement of Purpose

Literacy in one's first language (L1) has become essential for virtually anyone wishing to function in most of the modern world. At the same time, growing contact between the world's people has increased the need for foreign language learning and has highlighted the need for a greater understanding of the aspects, processes, development and implications of FL literacy (FLL). The Foreign Language Literacy National Special Interest Group (FLL N-SIG) (presently a provisional special interest group under the auspices of the Japan Association for Language Teaching) seeks to network people, ideas, theory, practice and experiences that can help lead to a better understanding of FLL. In doing so, we aim to move beyond idealized constructs of the L2 and FL learner, and to make clear the differences between L1, L2 and FL literacy practices, processes and theoretical models.

To do this, we seek to encourage locally relevant research into foreign language literacy in Japan and to map out commonalities and differences between features of foreign language literacy in Japan and in other countries. The FLL N-SIG also aims to foster and network study groups and local grassroots linkups with teachers in other countries in order to learn about their situations and needs, and to create greater understanding and mutual cooperation between teachers in different countries and situations.

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Academic Protocol and Targeted Rhetoric

Denise D. Brown
University of Library and Information Science
Tsukuba, Japan

Both literacy and rhetoric are, by their very nature, culture-specific institutions. Both are bound by the conventions and expectations of a particular speech community and a particular social code. Patterns of discourse have little universal value away from their immediate social systems. The acquisition of linguistic mechanisms is one thing, putting these mechanisms to use with the intimate knowledge of an insider is another. Thus in a very real sense, literacy and rhetoric are artificial constructs. They exist solely within the communal mind of a group of people and have merit solely because of collective procedure. Yet it is one of those human vagaries that academic protocol within a community is generally believed to be a universal truth, often without any comparative scrutiny whatsoever. In this paper I will discuss the nature of academic protocol, the linguistic conventions that define literacy in a speech community, and a procedure for teaching Anglo (i.e., English) rhetorical style.

Definitions of terms

Academic protocol can be taken to mean the rules and constraints that are operative on the written products of the educated circles of a linguistic fellowship. *Targeted* rhetoric is the practice whereby literacy in an L2 is systematically developed for the express purpose of efficacy amongst the members of an alien fellowship (the *target* community). In order to be perceived as efficacious in an acquired language, one must satisfy the demands and expectations of the L1 speakers in that community. I will define an *Anglo* speech community as the variety of English spoken in the home country (England), together with all of the varieties spoken in the former British empire, colonial powers, commonwealth nations, and British-mandated territories of today (i.e., the varieties of English spoken in America, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, South Africa, certain other African states, India, etc.). Note that I am using the term *Anglo* in its purely linguistic sense here, as a derivative of OE *Anglisc* (English).

Literacy in Anglo speech communities

First of all, it is necessary to consider what literacy and rhetoric *are*. We might say that literacy is the ability to utilise one's L1 proficiently enough to be able to read and write reasonably sophisticated texts; and that rhetoric is the ability to manipulate the lexis and syntax and stylistic devices of a linguistic code in order to be optimally received in that code. However, such a distinction is to draw a somewhat artificial divide between the two skills, so that I will use assume 'literacy' to subsume 'rhetoric'.

When considering literacy, one generally thinks of academic or scientific or journalistic writing rather than creative writing (as the latter allows a manipulation of form which the former do not). We have observed that the concept of literacy (and, by extension, rhetoric) is manifestly dependent upon its generating culture. Therefore, it follows that we must consider literacy only within the parameters of a specific cultural matrix. It happens

that *Anglo* literacy is broadly characterised by *linearity*. Whilst linearity in English written discourse is not an all-encompassing feature, and many English texts do in fact exhibit variant styles of organisation (cf. Braddock, 1974), it is nevertheless a feature that most Anglo speakers will recognise and implicitly adopt. One of many examples of linearity of text is the structural demand for a clear Introduction, Development, and Conclusion, logically progressing from the top to the bottom of a document in a vertical manner. This passion for linearity may have its origins in the Anglo-Saxon lineage of English (i.e., in the Northern European tribes of Angles and Saxons who invaded England in the 5th and 6th centuries A. D.). Certainly the native Celtic tongues of the English Isle (i.e., Scots Gaelic, Irish, Manx, Welsh, Cornish, and Breton of today—the languages that were pushed out to the 'fringe' of England) exhibit a natural lyricism and structural fluidity that Anglo-Saxon English must labour to achieve. And it is true that the majority of Western nations which are not Anglo in origin, e.g., France, Germany, Russia, and Spain, to list only a few, are patently less linear in their academic writing styles. These cultures exhibit a high tolerance for the circuitousness, digressions, and parenthetical sub-structures that academic protocol in English so rigorously denies. It seems then, that linearity is not so much a feature of the Western world as a feature of the *Anglo* world, a point which needs to be stressed frequently in the L2 classroom.

When teaching targeted rhetoric, one must make clear that one is teaching the conventions of a *nominated* L2 community (e.g., English), which may or may not be intrinsically valuable. Rhetorical conventions differ widely and each is as licit and effective in its own environment as the other. In Japanese literacy, for example, it is assumed that the reader is able to interpret the 'white' or 'empty' spaces between the lines (i.e., that which is unsaid), so that author and reader enter into a kind of collusion (S. Mushakoji, personal communication). If both parties understand the parameters of this protocol (i.e., that implicit messages are more important that explicit ones), then this rhetorical style is quite potent. Furthermore, it must be said that, due to the pervasiveness of Anglo writing in the Western hemisphere (in government, in the media, in academia, in legal documentation, in scientific and medical journals, in computing literature, etc.), rhetorical style which features linearity may be held in false preference to a host of other, equally legitimate academic protocols.

Literacy cross-culturally

If we consider literacy dispassionately then, it soon becomes clear that we must be ever-vigilant against preconceived conviction and prejudice when it comes to matters of academic protocol. Kaplan (1966), in a controversial and much-quoted paper, graphically depicted various modes of discourse structure according to what he believed was the exhibited pattern of textual development. These are repeated in Figure 1.

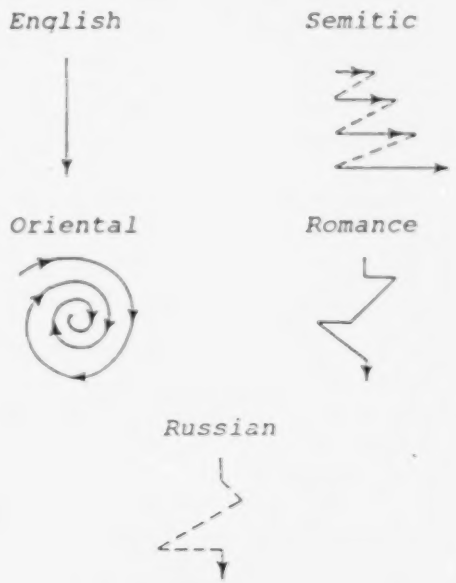

Figure 1. Graphic representations of various modes of discourse structure.[1]

[1] Adapted from "Cultural thought patterns in inter-cultural education" by R.B. Kaplan, 1966, *Language Learning*, *16*, p.15. Utilised with permission of R.B. Kaplan and *Language Learning*.

The 'Romance' diagram for the Romanic (i.e., Latin) structures of, for example, France, Italy, Rumania, and Spain is not so different to the ones drawn for Russia and Germany, as Figure 2 shows.

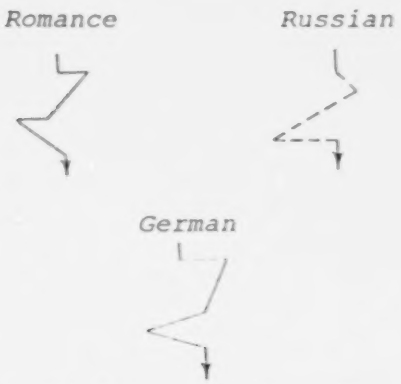

Figure 2. Graphic representations of certain Indo-European discourse structures (cf. Loveday, 1982 for the German).

Notice that all three diagrams in Figure 2 (representing a goodly portion of the 'Western' world) are hardly linear, suggesting that weaving, wavering, ambivalence, and lack of clear progression are unremarkable patterns of discourse organisation in these nations. This is especially noteworthy in that it contradicts any preexistent notions that 'Europeans' are of a single 'textual' frame of mind. And it is an excellent counterargument to the claim that 'linear' is the superior or preferred style for academic writing. However, I invite the reader to judge whether European texts match the diagrams listed above, noting that Kaplan has been censured over the years for his claims. Still, I will endorse him conceptually, and venture to say that whilst graphical revision might be in order, the principal notion holds (i.e., that cultures differ considerably in their modes of constructing text).

Asiatic 'circular' style of literacy

The 'Oriental' style of Figure 1 supposedly characterises an East Asian rhetorical pattern. In this rhetorical mode, the writer avoids a direct delineation of thesis (i.e., statement of topic) in the opening sections of text. The thesis may be mentioned towards the middle of the text, towards the end, or indeed perhaps never clearly at all. It is left to the reader to assemble the main thrust of the argument, based upon the clues in the text. Kaplan (1966) calls such a style an 'approach by indirection'. Discourse development follows a pattern of 'turning and turning in a widening gyre'. The loops revolve around the topic and view it from a variety of positions, but never address it directly. "Things are developed in terms of what they are not, rather than in terms of what they are" (Kaplan, op. cit). Loveday (1982) refers to this type of discourse as the 'dot-type' presentation of one item after the other, in a highly anecdotal or episodic manner, without ever actually stating a conclusion. And Fliegel (1987) refers to it as 'emblematic mode', one which presents a variety of generic outcomes rather than a single chosen position. The overriding principle for all of these discourse structures is that the reader must extrapolate a position from seemingly unrelated facts or situations. But as I have already suggested, the obscure textual clues may in fact be very obviously related to members sharing the same L1 code. This is perhaps a correlate of the goal of the discourse. Leki (1991) notes that rhetoric in the Asiatic tradition has an historical purpose of announcing truth rather than proving it, so that the speaker/writer arranges the propositions of the announcement in such a way that references to a communal, traditional wisdom invite easy and harmonious agreement. Rhetoric in the Western tradition, quite conversely, has an object of convincing peers of some (originally political) position, and consequently places much prominence on the speaker/writer's ability to reason and to marshal evidence. In summary then, we might describe the 'Oriental' mode of text development as deferential, anecdotal, and circuitous, one which seeks to address an issue by describing the surrounding terrain. It emphasises group collectivity, the elicitation of consent, and the avoidance of direct conflict (cf. Fliegel, op. cit.)

Problem areas for literacy in English

Although controvertible (cf. Braddock, 1974; Hinds, 1983; Mohan and Lo, 1985; Sa'adeddin, 1989; Leki, 1991), Kaplan's 1960s diagrams can be utilised as a springboard with which to view rhetorical patterns discriminately. We may disagree with terms such as 'Oriental' (a marked 'American' term, incidentally, since the *Orient* traditionally subsumes the Near, Middle, and Far East), and we may dispute his 'circular' representation in Figure 1. Yet Kaplan was among the first to identify the wide divergency in rhetorical orientations, and his work is seminal in the field of cross-cultural literacy. He was, in fact, rather cautious about his original claims, emphasising that they were exploratory and tentative.

So then, we have seen that linearity is at least a *prima facie* requirement of Anglo rhetorical patterning. Therefore, it must be explicitly taught and compared with the L2 speaker's native conventions (where possible). Other problem areas are the students' habitual lack of signalling devices (e.g., opening the discourse, introducing a new point, sequencing, illustration, qualification, generalising, summarising, concluding, etc.), improper layout of a document (formatting), choice of textual strategy (e.g., chronological; areal; ranking; comparison and contrast; cause and effect, discussion, etc.), syntactic error (e.g., tense and aspect; modality; voice; relative clauses; reference), and violation of academic protocol in the target language. I list below a few of the key problem areas I have identified in the teaching of literacy in English:

(i) proper presentation format (formatting)
(ii) linearity vs. circuity (structure)
(iii) use of semantic markers (signalling)
(iv) developmental style (style)
(v) syntactic error (syntax)
(vi) violation of academic protocol (protocol)

Number (i) is a rather boring but seemingly neglected domain concerned with presenting a document properly in English. Therefore, I usually address this point first when teaching Anglo protocol. It concerns such matters as recording one's personal details on a document (name, title, class/organisation), assigning a suitable title to the text, using standard margin settings (i.e., one inch or 2.54 cm), positioning the text on the page, employing section headings and subheadings, ensuring that the text is of a suitable length, and any other matters concerning the physical form of the document (paper size, binding, extra inclusions such as a table of contents, list of references, appendices, etc. where necessary).

Number (v) will be discussed in the next section. However, it might be appropriate to mention here that if syntactic or rhetorical deficiencies exist in the source code (i.e., the L1), then these tendencies will predictably carry into the L2 code. That is to say, if an L2 writer exhibits syntactic error or poor development in the target code, it may well be due not so much to L1 rhetorical interference as to the reality that the same blunders would be committed in the native language (cf. Mohan and Lo, 1985).

Procedure for teaching rhetorical literacy in English

For East Asian students, I generally draw the following two illustrations (Figure 3) on the blackboard, and invite their assent or dissent, according to their perceptions of their own language code.

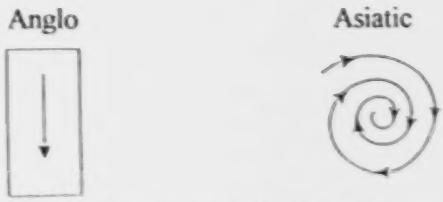

Figure 3. Linearity vs. 'circuity': (cf. Kaplan, 1966)

Whatever the outcome, their awareness of variant rhetorical patterning has been secured, and this in itself is a significant

advantage as they approach the acquisition of L2 literacy. It is then necessary to give detailed instruction on the components of linearity in English. Whilst I accept that linearity is a concept that may in fact be in need of critical revision, I will nevertheless repeat here the *broadly* defining outline of Anglo discourse structure which I present to students. Unsurprisingly, these can be divided into (a) the *textual*: Introduction (statement of thesis), Development (expansion of thesis, usually with supporting arguments), and Conclusion (summation or synthesis of thesis); and (b) the *sentential*: phrasal and clausal linearity, such as the characteristic word order of the L2 (e.g., SVO, SOV, VSO, etc.); coherence within nominal and verbal constituents; and proper anaphoric, cataphoric, and exophoric reference within or across clauses. Concerning structure in general, I have found that an exposition of structural linearity at the textual level helps learners to perceive its presence at the sentential level. That is to say, a cultivated appreciation of vertical linear structure at the macro level of *text* can facilitate a gradual appreciation of horizontal linear structure at the micro level of *sentence*. (For example, the perception of the overall linear pattern of SVO in English linguistic structure; the perception of the linear modification of a head element based upon the position of modifiers in the L2; the perception of the linear anaphoric reference of pronouns and relative clauses to nominal heads).

What is important is that the L2 learner appreciate the necessity for linearity in English, whether or not he or she believes it to be an attractive rhetorical quality. Understanding precisely what mechanisms need to be acquired is part of the adult learning process. While this may be a rationalist viewpoint, it is I think, defensible, given that textual organisation procedure is so little taught in either the L1 or L2 of many speakers. It might be useful to imagine the Anglo learner of Japanese who, having been accustomed to a lifetime of linearity and explicitness in his or her L1, suddenly finds that s/he must skirt the issue, delicately suggest rather than labour a point, and give much more credit to the reader than is customary in the native rhetorical mode. In targeted rhetoric pedagogy, the goal is always the *perception* of literacy in the L2.

Following on from the last section, below is a list of procedural steps which I have found to be useful when introducing the academic protocol for Anglo literacy:

A. General Skills

(i) formatting: proper presentation format
(ii) structure: linearity vs. circuity
(iii) signalling: use of semantic markers

B. Pointed Skills

(iv) style: representative text development
- (a) chronological (points arranged according to their temporal sequence)
- (b) areal (points arranged according to a categorical area)
- (c) ranking (points arranged according to their order of importance)
- (d) comparison and contrast (points arranged according to their similarities and dissimilarities)
- (e) cause and effect (points arranged according to a causal relationship between x and y)
- (f) discussion (points arranged according to a combinative utilisation of (a) – (e))

(v) syntax: syntactic strategies
- (a) tense and aspect (Past vs. Non-Past tense in English; Simple, Progressive, Perfective aspects)
- (b) modality (epistemic, deontic)
- (c) voice (active vs. passive)
- (d) relative clauses (restrictive vs. non-restrictive)
- (e) reference (anaphoric, exophoric, cataphoric)

(vi) protocol: adherence to L2 protocol

Note that number (v) is not necessarily to be taught *per se*; it is rather an inventory of essential linguistic mechanisms which can be successfully employed by the L2 learner, if the level of general proficiency is such that s/he would appreciate a pointed analysis and demonstration of use in the development of a text.

Conclusion

Academic convention, both spoken and written, is a culture-specific construct. Most protocols are 'top-down', in that they depend on what the speaker psychologically brings to the written discourse (cf. Jannuzi 1997). They are therefore culturally introspective, and by extension, universally inefficient. However, I hope that the above discussion convincingly conveys that the protocol of the target code (i.e., the requisite principles and expectations of the L2 rhetoric) can be acquired through systematic and explicit instruction in cross-cultural modes of literacy. I stress 'systematic' here because rhetoric is often haphazardly and uncomprehensively taught, if at all.

Finally, it is of paramount concern for writer and reader alike to suspend linguistic judgements when viewing text. This is so natural an inclination that few of us can resist this pitfall. However, to do so is to focus on form rather than on substance; on the packaging rather than on the gist of the text. But because so much depends on the use of proper protocol in a linguistic code, it happens time and again that quite worthy texts are summarily dismissed by the uninformed, with the typical comment that the writer 'doesn't know how to write'. In my own experience, I know that when I am asked to correct the written texts of Japanese colleagues, the various lexical and syntactic errors always seem trivial in comparison to a violation of the anticipated protocol (i.e., lack of linearity, no clear statement of thesis, no apparent introduction, no supporting arguments, no summation or synthesis: not articulating the controlling idea, not getting to the point, not expanding or defending the point, not returning to or exploiting the idea). Indeed I often wonder how our 'aggressive' Occidental discourse is received by the Oriental readership. Consequently, it behoves us all as educators to be as open and neutral as possible when approaching a complex task like targeted rhetoric.

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Dr. Denise Douglas-Brown can be contacted at Foreign Language Centre, University of Library and Information Science (ULIS), 1-2 Kasuga, Tsukuba 305, JAPAN, and by e-mail at <*ddbrown@ulis.ac.jp*>.

Key Concepts in FL Literacy: Phonemic Awareness

Charles Jannuzi

Fukui University, Japan

<jannuzi@ThePentagon.com>

In this third key concept article for *LAC*, I will look more closely at a term that is being discussed a lot in the literacy field: *phonemic awareness*. The perceived importance of this concept, in part, seems to arise because linguistic and psycholinguistic insights have long been a concern in literacy research and pedagogy. Linguistic insights, too, have played a significant role in ELT and TESOL, such as the prestigious, usually university-based areas of research and intellectual endeavor known as Applied Linguistics (AL) and Second Language Acquisition (SLA). However, phonemic awareness—both the term and the concepts it might denote—does not seem to be covered very deeply in the discourses of AL and SLA.

The state of the art: SLA

I consulted Ellis's (1994) monumental work on SLA, *The Study of Second Language Acquisition*, only to find that for the purposes of this key concept article, the term does not exist in the sort of SLA research and analysis that so often guides theory and practice in ELT/TESOL. We see this in actual workaday ELT/TESOL when both academics (such as teacher trainers) and classroom teachers dismiss phonology as "pronunciation practice", the main purpose of which is trivially to reduce or "fix" accents. Or they prioritize it out of existence, leaving it off already crowded syllabuses. The closest conceptualization of something that approaches the term "phonemic awareness" that I could find in the SLA literature is Ard (1989), who argues for a constructivist approach in accounting for L2 interlanguage phonology. He writes:

> A truly explanatory theory or model of the phonological competence of second language learners must provide an explanation of how learners could construct the phonological representation used in their pronunciations....In particular, the types of representations posited for competent native speakers could not be assumed to be available to second language learners. (p. 257)

Ard's argument does usefully point out that we should not presume L2 learners to be like native speakers in terms of underlying competence. Unfortunately, it does not go into any great detail about what implications L2 learners' psycholinguistic construction of the L2 phonology (such as it is—incomplete, negatively influenced by L1, etc.) might have for auditory and bottom-up language processing, phonemic awareness, and listening and reading L2 texts/discourse for meaning.

The state of the art: Literacy

A more complete if somewhat tautological working definition of phonemic awareness comes to us from the field of literacy. According to Williams (1995), it is "the awareness of sounds (phonemes) that make up spoken words" (p. 185). How might the situation be different with beginning level ESL and EFL students? Williams (1995) contends that "such awareness does not appear when young children learn to talk; the ability is not necessary for speaking and understanding spoken language. However, phonemic awareness is important to learning

to read [alphabetic written languages]" (p.185). In other words, phonemic awareness is *not* the intuitive, fluent phonological competence that normally results from acquiring a native language, a competence which underlies, in part, the ability to make meaning (decode and encode) in that language. It *is*, however, an additional knowledge that overlays such competence, a verifiable insight that *one's native or non-native* language can be broken down into sounds and sound combinations in order to relate them to the letters and letter combinations of the written language (provided that the writing system at least partly functions phonemically, as it does in English).

But L2 learners are different

One obvious problem for beginning level ESL and EFL learners is that they are not going to have acquired a native speaker's competence in English phonology. This interlanguage phenomenon is most clearly observable and predictable when the phonology of the student's L1 is markedly different from English. A good example is Japanese, because it has such a different speech rhythm, a much smaller set of sound contrasts (English 44, Japanese 21), and much simpler possibilities for syllable structure than English, a language to which it is as unrelated as a language can be. Yet even some Indo-European languages in the Romance branch of the family present the same sort of cross-linguistic problems in phonology (and interestingly enough, the speech rhythm and smaller set of sounds of spoken Japanese are overall closer to Italian or Spanish than either of these two are to English).

Since beginning level ESL and EFL students are not going to have an internalized native speaker competence with English phonology, their development must take a different path. This makes their ESL or EFL language and literacy development somewhat analogous to the learning disabled—at least in the senses that their development will not follow the fairly smooth path of the majority of native speakers and may require highly individualized, linguistically enlightened approaches to instruction and remediation.

Non-native language and literacy students must: (1) learn and/or acquire an adequate interlanguage phonology that compensates for the lack of native competence and *then* learn and/or acquire the phonemic awareness that is considered a necessary step in learning to read English or (2) learn and/or acquire an adequate interlanguage phonology while at the same time learning and/or acquiring the phonemic awareness necessary to read English.

Indeed, it could be logically concluded that effective phonemic awareness training can not precede the development of a sufficient, internalized interlanguage phonology, though it might be hoped that training and practice in both could prove mutually reinforcing (e.g. with a well thought out approach for adapting phonics to ESL/EFL). What seems to be most regrettable and confusing is the way written texts are often forced on absolute beginning level ESL/EFL students (such as in junior high schools here in Japan), with little or no attention given to their learner needs in (1) interlanguage phonology development, (2) phonemic awareness, or (3) phonic skills.

Some basic distinctions for teachers to keep in mind

The following is a sort of glossary of key terms that teachers should be clear on if they want to try incorporating phonological and phonemic awareness training into their ESL/EFL and non-native literacy classrooms.

Phonemics vs. phonetics

These two terms are often confused, yet there is an important underlying distinction that pertains to this discussion. In order for a person to understand and be understood in a language, they will, among other things, have constructed and internalized a sufficient set of distinct sound features. These features delimit the way we can make meaning with sounds in a given language. It is our phonemic *competence*, in part, with these sounds that allows us to perceive, produce, and pat-

tern them categorically in order to process a language, encode and decode it, make meaning in and communicate with it.

Spoken English across major dialects and as spoken for international communications has about 40 distinct sound segments called phonemes. We can become more conscious of these phonemes by using minimal pairs (i.e., they differ in pronunciation by only one sound) to deduce their existence. In English, the minimal pair, 'lip' and 'rip', are two different words with different meanings. So, we can infer that the /l/ sound is a different phoneme than the /r/ sound. But to speakers of Japanese, the distinction is not so categorically clear; in both perception and production, they tend to confuse an English /l/ with an English /r/ because to them both sounds seem equally similar to their one native sound, a tapped (and possibly rolled) /r/ similar to the /r/s of Italian or Russian. English's relatively large sound inventory leads to many other analogous problems for Japanese learners of English.

For the purposes of non-native LL and literacy, phonemic ability as it has been discussed above is not the only concern. Since the sounds that give substance to human languages are more than a linguist's abstraction, non-native students must develop a phonetic talent, too. This could be argued just for the reason that there are many other sounds humanly possible outside the set of phonemes of one's native language, a basic metalinguistic understanding that could helpfully precede trying to learn a second or foreign language. What's more, any native language as it is actually realized in communication involves more different sounds (called allophones) than the set of phonemes described by linguists. Phonetics is about how *all* sounds, so long as humans are capable of making them with their vocal tracts, are physically produced and received in acoustic space.

As native speakers we tend to limit categorically how we perceive and monitor the production of sounds in order to decode and encode messages and make meaning in a given language; but, outside of our heads and brains and the linguistic intelligence we constantly project from the top-down, sounds in the external world are still just sounds, noises, disturbances. We *think* that the stressed, aspirated (with a puff of air) /p/ sound we hear at the beginning of the English word 'pot' is the same sound as the unaspirated /p/ (or possibly a glottal stop) at the end of the word 'top'. Phonemically speaking, it *is*, as we force both sounds into the same /p/ category. This categorization is no doubt reinforced by the phonemic aspects of written English, which does not distinguish between the phonetically different /p/ sounds, spelling them both <p>.

Phonetically speaking the word final /p/ is not the same as the initial one, because all sounds are in actuality both uniquely realized and predictably affected by the sounds that precede and proceed them in the stream of speech. However scientifically interesting such variations and effects are, if we attended only to them, we would never make sense of utterances as meaning something. We also need to remember, however, that beginning ESL/EFL learners will not be able to categorize the sounds phonemically with anywhere near the selective efficiency of a native speaker; therefore, phonetic variations, because they complicate and distract, help turn the stream of sounds into even more of an acoustic blur for the beginning FL learner.

Phonology = phonemics + phonetics

Some linguists might use the term "phonology" to encompass both "phonemics" (the distinct sounds of a given language or the study of them) and "phonetics" (all speech sounds, including the actual realizations and variants of phonemes, or the study of them). I think that, for the purpose of non-native English literacy, it is a useful grouping to make. When earlier I wrote that our students must acquire and/or learn a sufficient, internalized interlanguage phonology as well as phonemic awareness, my use of the term "phonology" was meant to entail both the

phonemic and phonetic aspects to learning spoken English as a SL or FL.

Phonological vs. phonemic awareness

In ESL/EFL literacy, this is an additional but important distinction we could make. As I have written above, beginning level ESL/EFL students have to acquire and/or learn a sufficient, internalized phonology that allows them to listen to and speak English for comprehension and making meaning. The need for phonemic awareness arises when it is time for the students to start to relate their interlanguage phonology to alphabetically written English. A better term for this step in learner development, however, might be *phonological awareness* (thus subsuming phonemic awareness). This would be a more complete sort of metalinguistic consciousness—a developed set of insights about *both* the phonemic and relevant phonetic aspects of English useful to help in relating the spoken language to the written one. These types of conscious, metalinguistic abilities might also help in the learning and/or acquisition of the second or foreign language.

It should be noted, however, that taking an explicit, metalinguistic analysis to the level of the phoneme is not necessarily a notion that is easy to grasp, no matter how well developed a learner's interlanguage phonology might be. Indeed, it is hardly intuitive for native speakers of English. I would guess that if you asked most literate native speakers of English what the distinct sounds of English are they would start by saying the 'ABCs'. There is an intuitive analysis going on here, but only to the level of the syllable: except for the pronunciation of the letter <W> (which is three syllables) , the names of the letters of the English alphabet are syllables that almost invariably contain a target sound of English. An examination of Japanese literacy also reveals that the native literate person's intuitive level of analysis stops at the syllable: the Japanese do not say their 'ABCs', but rather their *kana*, which are symbols by and large standing for all of the possible syllables of spoken Japanese.

Whether we call it phonological or phonemic awareness, in the form most basic to non-native English literacy, it entails being able to distinguish single and combined sounds occurring initially from the rest of the syllables and words that follow. Take for example the one-syllable word "cat", which joins three phonemes of English (/k/ + /æ/ + /t/) into one unit of meaning. Someone who is phonemically aware at a minimal level can abstract the initial consonant (or *onset)* /k/ sound from the rest of the syllable and word (the *rime*, i.e. the vowel /æ/ plus consonant sound /t/).

Unlike Japanese, for example, English can have fairly complex consonant clusters at the beginning of words, too. A student who is phonemically aware to a sufficient degree will be able to separate the initial cluster or onset /str/ from the rime /aip/ in the word "stripe". If presented orally, such words and their partial segmentation into onset and rime can be used to test and teach phonemic awareness. If done in written form without an oral presentation, however, they require an additional set of abilities: decoding (or word attack or phonic) skills.

Phonological or phonemic awareness + phonics skills = beginning reading

Phonic/word attack/decoding skills take phonemic awareness one step further into the realm of the written language. They require that the learner have (1) a sufficiently large, internalized, mentally constructed interlanguage phonology of English, (2) a phonological or phonemic awareness that distinct sounds can be abstracted from larger syllables, words, and the flow of speech sounds, and (3) the skill to apply these abilities and insights to the alphabetic code of actual written English in order to read and write for making meaning and communication.

Native writing systems (ours vs. theirs)

Although it is a given in TESL and TEFL that our students' spoken native languages are

going to have an effect on their abilities with English (e.g., interference or negative transfer in phonology, grammar, vocabulary use, etc.), it is striking how little consideration is given to the importance of native writing systems, especially since we so often take (and often take wrongly) as a given a sort of universal literacy that is supposed to result from being a native speaker of a language. As teachers we presuppose in our students an orientation to the written text as a useful language learning tool: how many teachers try to teach a SL/FL without written texts?

In Japan our students are typically well along in developing adult-level literacy in Japanese by the time EFL is introduced as a junior high school subject. One problem is that the sort of metalinguistic awareness that arises from learning to read and write Japanese as a native language and prestige dialect might be inadequate and even misleading for beginning level EFL literacy. This characterization could be extended to non-native teachers as well as students.

Alphabetic writing systems: phonemic vs. phonetic vs. mixed

Languages written alphabetically usually fall into these three categories: phonemic, phonetic, and mixed. Written Finnish and Spanish are often cited as examples of written natural languages that are highly phonemic; that is, one distinct unit of sound (a phoneme) is conventionally represented with one distinct unit of the writing system (a grapheme). A one-phoneme-to-one-grapheme unity prevails in a writing system that is phonemic.

Although not usually, for certain purposes, Japanese can be written alphabetically using a system called *romaji* (meaning roman letters). At least one officially approved form of *romaji* is quite phonemic and was actually proposed during both the Meiji Era and the postwar Occupation to be a replacement for the complex written Japanese that has evolved and is used today (written Japanese is a mix of logographic and syllabic characters). Another form of *romaji* exists for pedagogical purposes and is quite well known to JSL/JFL students. It has been designed to be somewhat more phonetic because phonetic representations are helpful to SL/FL students, but not completely so, as it misses the major allophones (predictable variations of a phoneme) of a problem sound in JSL/JFL, the so-called syllabic /N/.

There is no denying that written English is an alphabetic system. It just can not be described as purely phonetic or phonemic, and actually gives a rather elusive twist to the meaning of the category "mixed." It is mixed in the sense that it has evolved into a balance of both phonemic and morpho- or logophonemic elements for setting down into the writing the spoken language. This has important implications for how we actually are able to read written English. As Sampson (1985) states:

> Anyone who succeeds in becoming a skilled user of written English must eventually learn to use both 'look-and-say' (or logographic) and 'phonic' strategies in both processing modes, reading and writing. The phonic strategy must be used in reading when one encounters a new word....On the other hand, a familiar word with a thoroughly irregular spelling must be handled logographically even by the writer: no-one could spell *knight* correctly by 'sounding out' the word and converting phonemes to graphemes....Parenthetically, even a 'phonic' reading strategy, when it is used, need not necessarily involve unconscious resort to a fixed, algorithmic set of rules...for converting letter-sequences to sound-sequences. An alternative view holds that an unfamiliar word is read by constructing analogies between its spelling and that of familiar words which can be read logographically, and guessing at the pronunciation of the new word by reference to the known pronunciations of the familiar words. (p. 209)

Conclusion: Not so fast

In native language literacy, some theorists, researchers, and educators have re-examined the possible importance of phonemic awareness and have come to this conclusion: phonemic awareness is a necessary skill in becoming literate. Some more enthusiastic advocates have even gone so far as to draw a causal connection: adequate phonemic awareness causally underlies the jump to beginning literacy. My reading of the literature, unfortunately, does not allow me to support a casual connection. The phonemic awareness that has been measured by researchers and observed by classroom teachers may be *epiphenomenal*, in which case it may not causally underlie reading development in English, but rather occur along with it. True, it might also be a necessary pre-condition for successful reading development, but one of many and therefore not in itself sufficient.

Also, as with so many other things we might isolate to teach explicitly and deductively—e.g., grammar, vocabulary, study skills, and so on—there is the question of whether or not such instruction leads to effective learning for the majority of our students. If phonemic awareness training is to be a part of non-native literacy, just what are the instructional technologies and strategies that will allow us to present it to our students as something they can learn, assimilate, and apply in novel situations? Are either phonics or whole language approaches, which have been largely developed for middle class native speakers of English's prestige dialects, adequate for systematically addressing our students' needs? One thing is certain: There is plenty for us to explore and exchange ideas about in our reading and professional development, our classroom research, and our teaching.

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Recommended Reading

Adams, M.J. (1990). *Beginning to read: Thinking and learning about print*. Champaign, IL: Center for the Study of Reading, The Reading Research and Education Center, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Truch, S. (1991). *The missing parts of whole language*. Calgary, Alberta: Foothills Educational Materials.

Charles Jannuzi can be contacted at Fukui University College of Education, Bunkyo 3-9-1, Fukui 910, JAPAN, and by Email at *<jannuzi@edu00.f-edu. fukui-u.ac.jp>* or *<jannuzi@ThePentagon.com>*.

Errata

In the article, "Key Concepts in FL Literacy: Schema Theory" by Charles Jannuzi (*Literacy Across Cultures* Vol. 1, No. 2, September 1997, pp. 7-12), it was stated that a "script" for ordering a meal at a restaurant was a type of culturally specific content schema (p. 8). Such a script is actually an example of a culturally specific formal schema.

Also, in the article "Guessing Word Meaning from Context: Should We Encourage It?" by David Dycus (*Literacy Across Cultures* Vol. 1, No. 2, September 1997, pp. 1-6), the full reference for "Barnett, 1988 " was omitted, and the year of publication cited in the article was incorrect. The full reference is: Barnett, M. (1989). *More than meets the eye*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall Regents. Finally, in the same article, references to articles by both J. Coady and B. Laufer in the book *Second language vocabulary acquisition* incorrectly give the year of publication as 1996. The correct year is 1997. The respective authors and the editor apologize for these errors.

Grammar, Reading, and Listening Skills Among Japanese Students of English: A Comparison of Respective Abilities

Bern Mulvey
Fukui University

Are the reading and grammar skills of Japanese students of English really that much better than their admittedly poor listening and speaking skills? Judging from comments made in journals and on academic list serves (see, for instance, Shimaoka & Yamashiro, 1990), many Japanese and many foreign academics living in Japan seem in agreement that this is indeed the case, but on what hard data is this commonly heard conclusion based?

I decided to look into this question while working as the Academic Supervisor for the ESL school affiliated to the University of Redlands between 1990 and 1993. School policy dictated that non-matriculated international students receive an institutional (i.e. non-official, yet conducted as if it were official) TOEFL examination every 10 weeks as a means of judging their progress toward matriculation, with each test being taken from a large library of old (at least 8+ year old) TOEFL examinations. While the possibility of individual students repeating an exam they had taken eight years prior in their own country did exist, it was felt that eight years was a sufficiently long time period to prevent most occurrences of this. Also, as the average age of most of the Japanese students was 21 years old, the possibility of repetition was practically eliminated for the Japanese student population, none of whom would have taken an official TOEFL examination at the age of 13). Finally, due to the large number of tests on file, it was possible to ensure that no student received the same institutional TOEFL during my stay there, something true even with those students who had failed to matriculate into the regular university after 3 years.

A total of 183 Japanese students studied at the ESL school for various periods during the time of this study, taking 824 tests in all. Their average scores are as follows:

Listening	Grammar	Reading
49	46	40

The average overall TOEFL score received by Japanese students for this period was 450. The results of scores received by newly arrived Japanese taking their first institutional exam (163 of the total) were slightly different:

Listening	Grammar	Reading
43	44	34

The average overall TOEFL score received by this group was 403.

As the above two tables illustrate, reading ability actually tests as the students' weakest skill, with grammar and listening ability testing almost equally.

Of course, an important question that needs to be asked is what exactly is proved by such score discrepancies—i.e. what do results from diagnostic tests such as the TOEFL really mean? While both TOEFL and TOEIC regularly conduct validity analysis (Macgregor, 1997, p. 31), the fact that an exam accurately tests the skills it is supposed to is only the first step to answering the question of what exactly a score of, say, 410 tells us about someone's ability to perform in a particular skill area. Still, the above findings, combined with similar conclusions reached in research conducted by Kitao and Miyamoto (1982), Kitao and Yoshida (1985), and Saeki (1992) and Nishijima (1995), seem to suggest that the prevailing view of Japanese English learners being "good at grammar, reading, and writing, but bad at listening and speaking" needs to be more

critically examined. And if further studies result in findings similar to those mentioned above, it would seem that the current methods of teaching grammar and reading in Japan—considered in themselves comparatively successful—need to be further examined as well. At the very least, given that the average TOEFL Reading Section score of 183 college-age Japanese language learners—some of whom had spent upwards of two years in America working to improve their English—was only 400, the oft-heard truism of Japanese over-all competency in English reading seems in need of serious re-consideration.

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Contact information on page 22.

Links to Literacy

Literacy Links: Phonology, Phonetics, Phonemic Awareness and Phonics

Charles Jannuzi

<jannuzi@ThePentagon.com>

As the Key Concept article in this issue is about phonemic awareness and related terms, I thought it would be worthwhile to put together a set of WWW links that would be useful for ***LAC*** readers in their professional reading on this topic. True, the WWW is now cluttered with commercialism, but it is also offers an unprecedented abundance of real content, much of it free of charge. For this set of links, I asked myself, could I use the WWW as a virtual library? In retrospect, I think I accomplished more than I ever could at an actual library. Here are the results:

Yahoo.com <http://www.yahoo.com/>

I find Yahoo consistently to be the best place to start a search. The full URL for the section on language acquisition is **<http://www.yahoo.com/Social_Science/Linguistics_and_Human_Languages/Language_Acquisition>**. To get straight to things to read on phonemic awareness, try **<http://av.yahoo.com/bin/query?p=phonemic&hc=0&hs=2>**.

ERIC Digests <http://www.ed.gov/databases/ERIC_Digests/index/>

There are many ways to ERIC Digests about literacy, bilingualism, ESL/ EFL, language, applied linguistics, and the like. The above address is the fastest way in that I have found. To do a search, try **<http://www.ed. gov/Search/eric.html>**. Rick Reynolds *<InterPro @a1.mbn.or.jp>*, the ELTASIA-L listowner, reports ERIC digests bibliographies about phonics at **<http://www. indiana. edu/~eric_rec/ieo/digests/d93bib.html>**, and one on phonological awareness at **<http://www.indiana.edu/~eric_rec/ieo/digests/d119bib.html>**.

Here is an example of an ERIC Digest I was able to find at **<http://www.ed.gov/databases/ERIC_Digests/ed372375.html>**:

> ED372375 94 Phonics in Whole Language Classroom. ERIC Digest. Author: Weaver, Constance.

Summer Institute of Linguistics <http://www.sil.org/>

This site is a great place on the WWW to start learning about linguistics and expanding your language awareness. It also offers free IPA fonts for your Win or Mac computers. If interested, go to **<http://www.sil.org/ computing/ fonts/ipareadme.html>**. Also at SIL, there is a large set of informative articles at **<http:// www. sil.org/lingualinks/ library/>**. To narrow your search down to literacy-related articles, try **<http:// www.sil.org/lingualinks/library/ literacy>**.

Reading Online <http://www.readingonline.org/>

This is the online publication of the International Reading Association **<http://www.ira.org>**. You can read the IRA's position statement on "Phonemic Awareness and the Teaching of Reading" and participate in an online discussion at **<http://www.readingonline.org/critical/phonemic/draft.html>**.

Brett Reynolds/Sakuragaoka Jr. & Sr. High School <http:// eslsv001. esl.sakuragaoka.ac.jp/ teachers/BR/papers/>

Brett Reynolds <*brett.reynolds@eslsv001.esl.sakuragaoka.ac.jp*> has written and put together quite a few papers about teaching and testing phonemic awareness and implementing phonics for EFL in Japan at the secondary level. If you (1) are an ALT on the JET Programme, (2) teach Asian students at the secondary level, or (3) are just interested in the topics, there are plenty of ideas to read, think about, and try out at this WWW address.

Individual articles available on the WWW

Searching the WWW can often lead to interesting documents in somewhat unexpected places. Here are the URLs of a few sites containing articles related to phonics, phonology and phonetics, along with the titles available.

Fathermag.com <http://www.kidsource.com/ kidsource/content2/phoemic.p. k12.4.html>

"Phonemic Awareness: An Important Early Step in Learning to Read" by Roger Sensenbaug.

<http://www.cet.fsu.edu/tree/ article1.html>

"Phonemic Awareness Training: Application of Principles of Direct Instruction" by J.E. Spector.

<http://www.clas.ufl.edu/users/ rscholes/psa.htm>

"The Case Against Phonemic Awareness" by Robert J. Scholes.

Links for exploring phonology, phonetics, and pronunciation

If the sites above are still not enough for you, or don't quite have what you are looking for, here are a few more worth considering.

American Spoken English <http://www.americanspoken english.com/>

This site is a commercial site, but one selling well thought-out materials for learners and teachers of English at very reasonable prices.

Studying Phonetics on the Net <http://weber.u.washington.edu/~dillon/PhonResources.html>

This is a truly great site to visit to study many aspects of human speech. One interesting feature completely explains how to translate IPA conventions into ASCII for e-mail discussion lists. The sound files of American and British vowels and consonant phones of English worked well on my Acer multi-media notebook with Windows 95 Plus installed. To download sound files go to **<http:// weber.u.washington.edu/~dillon/newstart. html>** and **<http:// weber.u.washington.edu/~dillon/consframe2.html>**.

Finally, here are a few more sites definitely worth visiting. While there are no site descriptions, the names are fairly descriptive and should give you a reasonable indication of what you will find when you visit.

(Johann Wolfgang Goethe Universitat Frankfurt, Institut fur Phonetik) OnlineBibliography: Phonetics/ SpeechTechnology <http://www.uni-frankfurt.de/~ifb/bib_engl.html>

John Higgins' Minimal Pairs for English <http://www.stir.ac.uk/epd/celt/staff/higdox/wordlist/index.htm>

The International Phonetic Association (IPA) <http://www.arts.gla.ac.uk/IPA/ipa.html>

Charles Jannuzi can be contacted at Fukui University College of Education, Bunkyo 3-9-1, Fukui 910, JAPAN, and by e-mail *at <jannuzi@edu00.f-edu.fukui-u.ac.jp>*.

Editor's note: The following article is the second in a series on booksellers on the World Wide Web, the first appearing in the previous issue of ***Literacy Across Cultures*** *(September, 1997, Vol. 1, No. 2). The opinions, are the author's alone and do not necessarily represent those of the Foreign Language Literacy N-SIG or of* ***Literacy Across Cultures****, and no endorsement of any site or company is implied.*

Booksellers on the WWW: Specialty Sellers

Charles Jannuzi
<jannuzi@ThePentagon.com>

First a couple of notes about general booksellers, which were covered in the last ***LAC***. I found another U.K.-based bookseller that offers a complete WWW service. They are called the Internet Bookshop and describe themselves "as Europe's largest online" store. When searching for a title in English, it's a good idea to inquire also with booksellers in the U.K. because almost twice as many different titles are published annually there than in the U.S.A. So another complete bookseller on the WWW to check out is at **<http://www. bookshop.co.uk/>**.

Also, if you are not really into web-browsing and web-shopping, you can always e-mail

The Goodbook Guide of the U.K., who can be contacted electronically at this address: *<enquiries@good-book-guide.co.uk>*.

LAC reader Teresa Moraes Vaz in Portugal reports that the Goodbook Guide has given her the best service and cheapest shipping rates to Continental Europe so far. By the way, the Goodbook Guide publishes a monthly magazine reviewing many current titles, and if you visit their homepage you can order a trial subscription. Their homepage, which is not set up for complete retail service, is found at **<http://www.good-book-guide.com/>**. You can, however, do title inquiries from a form found at the webpage. They also sell CD ROMs and videos (but if you live in North America or Japan, remember that the U.K. uses the PAL standard for video).

Next, on to the specialty booksellers. I selected these because I thought they would be of special interest to FL and literacy educators.

Specialty WWW Booksellers

Keltic Bookshop
<http://www.keltic.co.uk/>
Specialty: ELT/EFL titles

Surely one of the first stops for anyone wanting to buy titles in ELT. If they don't have it listed, they will get it if you inquire, and that includes books that teachers might want to get but that are outside of ELT. Their complete catalogue is available via a search page, but you can also order print copies from them. The annual paper version is quite a nice guide to what is in print in British ELT. I searched for a sample title, *The Lexical Approach* by Michael Lewis and was given a price of 13.50 GBP, plus S & H to wherever I was going to have it sent. Let's use that as a basis for comparison at other ELT/ESL/EFL booksellers. The site is not yet set up for secure, encrypted orders with advanced browsers, but you can set up an account with Keltic so that you do not have to send out your credit card information. Alternatively, you could print up the ordering form from the browser and fax it to them. I have been informed that the site will soon add secure ordering.

Delta Systems
<http://www.delta-systems.com/>
Specialty: ESL/EFL and Foreign Language Teaching/Learning titles

I had ordered from this U.S. company before using their mail-order catalogues, but it took awhile to find them on the Web. It seems there are quite a few enterprises in software that use the name, "Delta Systems". The address above gets you to the Delta Systems that specializes in ESL/EFL and FLT books. They have two large catalogues (ESL/EFL and FLT) that you can search through a database or that you can browse just as you would the paper versions. Like Keltic, the site is not yet set up for secure ordering using encryption. I suggest you fax your credit card information when placing an order. The sample ELT title, *The Lexical Approach*, was offered at 28.95 USD, making it quite a bit more expensive than the Keltic price. Obviously, though, the S&H will vary depending on where you live, and the sample title is a U.K. one. Maybe Delta will have better prices for books published in the U.S.A.

Multilingual Books and Tapes
<http://www.esl.net/mbt/>
Specialty: ESL and FLT/FLL titles

I found this U.S.-based company's site worth listing not just for its selection of materials and software in ESL, but also for its wonderful variety of language teaching and learning courses in many, many different languages. If you want to learn such varied languages as Albanian, Kurdish, Lakota Sioux, Passamaquoddy, or Zulu, here would be a great place to find study materials. You can search their database and make secure orders. This is a great site for the English speaker who wants to teach and/or learn languages.

World of Reading
<http://www.wor.com/>
Specialty: ESL and FLT/FLL titles

World of Reading offers a variety of books, audio tapes, videos and software for both ESL and a large number of foreign languages, and complements the Multilingual Books and Tapes site described above. Secure ordering is available for those using an advanced version of Netscape Navigator.

A+ Books for Educators
<http://www.aplusbooks.com/>
Specialty: Professional books for educators, including literacy and ESL/ bilingual

I found a lot of interesting titles that overlap with my concerns as an EFL teacher but which are not typically found in the ELT mainstream. A good site to visit if you are looking to expand your professional reading habits into other areas of education besides ELT. There is an order form, but it is not secure, so it is better to submit the credit card information via fax or phone.

Academic Therapy Publications
<http://www.atpub.com/>
Specialty: Special education, learning disabilities, assessment (including L2 learners), low level-high interest reading material

This being a firm with two lines of products and a clear sense of purpose, I will quote their own homepage:

> Established in 1965, Academic Therapy Publications was one of the first publishers to meet the needs of teachers, parents, and students in the field of special education and learning disabilities. Over the years, the company has extended the range of assessments and supplementary educational materials to include publications that can be used by regular classroom teachers, special education teachers, parents, educational therapists, ESL teachers, and specialists in all fields working with persons with reading, learning, and communication disabilities. Attention is focused on the inefficient learner who, although intellectually capable, is unable to achieve academically by traditional methods.

There is a lot here for ESL, EFL, bilingual and literacy people to explore. Although this site is not set up for ordering, you can browse their two catalogues here and order the hard-copy versions at this e-mail address: *<atpub @aol. com>*.

Brookline Books
<http://people.delphi.com/ brooklinebks/index.html>
Specialty: Disabilities, special education, literacy, language teaching, professional development, personal improvement

This site allows you to segue nicely from ATP. The variety of titles described is too broad to summarize here. It is another site that will definitely help you to expand your professional and personal reading habits. They are an Amazon.com associate, so you can order books listed at their site through Amazon **<http://www.amazon.com>**. Of course, Amazon orders are secure. You can also contact Brookline's sales people by e-mail at *<BROOKLINEBKS@ delphi. com>*. That is how I placed my order for books and software on the qualitative and quantitative assessment of text difficulty.

Learning Links
<http://home.navisoft.com/ learninglinks/index.htm>
Specialty: literacy, literature, materials for literature-based reading programs

While ELT/EFL publishers do offer graded readers and materials to support teaching with them, another approach might be to adapt materials for native and ESL literacy toEFL. Learning Links has a lot to offer along these lines. You can sample their catalogue and order a hardcopy by e-mail at <*sharon_walsh@wcj.com*>.

Social Studies School Service <http://socialstudies.com/>

Specialty: Educational materials of all types and content areas, including composition, multicultural studies, and global issues

This company doesn't specialize in materials for ESL/EFL/ELT, but if you want to try content approaches or teach American culture its catalogues contain a number of potentially useful titles (books, videos, CD ROMs, etc). The site is not set up for web-based sales, but there is an order form for their many different mail order catalogues. You can e-mail them at <*access@socialstudies.com*>.

Sasuga Japanese Bookstore <http://world.std.com/~sasuga/>

Specialty: Anything related to Japan (books, language learning materials, bilingual software)

I have included this site to round out this list of ten. And why not a site that specializes in things related to Japan, its culture and language? You can place an order at the website, but it is not secure so better to send the card data in a fax (they say that if you place the order at the site they will call you back to get the card info). You can also contact them and order by e-mail: <*sasuga@world.std.com*>.

Happy travels and shopping on the World Wide Web!

Would you like to receive the e-mail version of *Literacy Across Cultures*?

If you or someone you know would like a copy, contact Charles Jannuzi <*jannuzi@edu00.f-edu.fukui-u. ac.jp*> with a short message explaining that you want to subscribe. Please remember to write **"subscribe LAC"** in the subject header.

We've moved our WWW site! Point your browser to <http://www.aasa.ac.jp/~dcdycus>

Issues of ***Literacy Across Cultures*** can be seen at our web site, so please visit regularly. We appreciate any reports about bugs, problems with browsers, and so on. We don't want the site to be limited to an archive for ***Literacy Across Cultures***, so we appreciate contributions and content of all types. For more information contact David Dycus <*dcdycus@asu.aasa.ac.jp*>or Charles Jannuzi <*jannuzi@edu00.f-edu.fukui-u.ac.jp*>.

Extensive Reading in the Second Language Classroom. Richard Day and Julian Bamford. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1998. Pp.xv +238. ISBN 0-521-56829-3 (soft cover).

Having learners read extensively on their own, at their own level and for their own pleasure is certainly an attractive idea. But when faced with the problems of actually establishing and administering an extensive reading program, many teachers opt for the traditional textbook-based reading class. This is a regrettable mistake, according to Richard Day and Julian Bamford in *Intensive Reading in the Second Language Classroom*. They argue persuasively that the benefits of extensive reading outweigh any perceived drawbacks, and show how a program can be implemented almost anywhere.

The book is divided into three sections. The first, THE DIMENSIONS OF EXTENSIVE READING, containing five chapters, deals with the theoretical justifications for extensive reading. It begins with a short introduction to extensive reading, followed by a brief but informative discussion of reading as a cognitive process and how extensive reading contributes to the development of reading ability. Next, the authors consider attitude and motivation in second language reading, showing how both are positively influenced by extensive reading. The fourth chapter offers further support by presenting results of research specifically done on extensive reading programs. The section ends with a short chapter on integrating extensive reading into the second language curriculum.

The second section, MATERIALS FOR EXTENSIVE READING: ISSUES IN DEVELOPMENT, offers a defense of the cornerstone of virtually every extensive reading program: the graded reader. Graded readers have been attacked because they violate the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach's insistence on the superiority of *authentic* reading materials. The authors strongly challenge "the cult of authenticity," pointing out the difficulties in clearly defining what "authentic" and "simplified" actually mean. They argue that because graded readers communicate with their intended audience according to the writer's purpose, they are themselves an authentic genre, one which Day and Bamford term *language learner literature*.

The authors devote the eight chapters of the final section to the process of setting up a program. One can find advice on and answers to virtually any conceivable problem or question regarding curriculum, selecting and acquiring a suitably diverse collection of reading materials, and administering and assessing a program . There are also useful suggestions on how to convince skeptical students, parents, and administrators of the benefits of an extensive reading program. Day and Bamford also give examples of successful programs in radically different situations, from well-equipped libraries and classrooms in Japan to small schools without libraries in central Africa.

The book ends with a useful appendix of 600 of the best language learner literature books (in English) based on the Edinburgh Project on Extensive Reading (EPER) database. Book listings include title, author, genre, region, the gender to which the book will likely appeal, and publisher and series.

Extensive Reading in the Second Language Classroom is clearly written and organized, and non-native English speakers should find it accessible. It is a practical book that all teachers can benefit from reading.

Reviewed by David Dycus
Aichi Shukutoku University

Are you a JALT member? Then join us!

The Foreign Language Literacy National Special Interest Group is growing fast, and with your help we can soon have the 50 members we need to be fully recognized by JALT. If you are a JALT member and have an interest in some facet of reading, writing and/or literacy, please join us!

JALT members can join the FLL N-SIG by sending ¥1500 to the JALT Central Office using the postal money transfer (*yubin furikae*) form included in issues of *The Language Teacher*. On the line labeled "Other", write "FLL N-SIG (forming)." There is no need to renew your membership each year **until** we reach 50 members and become fully recognized, so why not join today?

Not a JALT member? There is still a place for you!

Only JALT members can become members of the FLL N-SIG. However, at present, non-members in any country can receive copies of our publication, ***Literacy Across Cultures***, and are encouraged to contribute articles, reviews, and perspective pieces to it. In addition, we are sending this newsletter out in an e-mail version, which you can receive by contacting Charles Jannuzi at *<jannuzi@ edu00.f-edu.fukui-u.ac.jp>*. For information on obtaining a printed version, contact David Dycus by e-mail at *<dcdycus@ asu.aasa.ac.jp>* or *<dcdycus@japan-net.or.jp>* or at the address in the "Officers and Contact Information" section on page 22.

Call for Submissions

Literacy Across Cultures, a publication of JALT's Foreign Language Literacy N-SIG, welcomes submissions, in English or Japanese, on topics related to reading and writing and their social product, literacy. We invite any interested person to submit:

- articles (around 1000-3000 words, not heavily referenced)
- perspective/opinion pieces
- book reviews
- annotated bibliographies
- short summaries/reviews of journal articles
- responses to ***LAC*** articles
- descriptions/reviews of literacy-related World Wide Web sites
- classroom and teaching tips

for upcoming issues. In addition, we welcome annotated bibliographies and other collections of information on topics related to literacy, both for ***LAC*** and for our WWW site.

Literacy Across Cultures is published three times a year, in February, June, and September. Submissions for a given issue must be received by the 10th of January, May, and August respectively. We encourage relevant submissions that may not fit into any of the categories above.

Submissions can be made in the following ways:

1) As attachments to an e-mail message to the editor. The text should be provided twice, once in a Text file (.TXT) format and once in a Rich Text Format (.RTF). The e-mail message should include a message to the editor explaining the content of the submission and a short personal biography to accompany the submission if accepted. The message should

include information about what computer OS was used (Mac or IBM) and what word processor was used, including the version number of that software. If possible, an additional version saved in a Word Perfect format (ver. 5.2 to 7.0) is appreciated. It should be sent to David Dycus, the *LAC* editor, at <*dcdycus@asu.aasa.ac.jp*>, with a copy (CC) sent to <*dcdycus@japan-net.or.jp*>.

2) On a 1.44 mb floppy disk accompanied by a printed version of the submission. The text on the floppy disk must be provided in 2 formats, once in a Text file (.TXT) format and once in a Rich Text Format (.RTF). If possible, a version saved in a Word Perfect format (version 5.2 to 7.0) is appreciated. A short personal biography should accompany the submission. (See the address below.)

3) If the author does not have access to a computer, two typed, double-spaced copies of the text and any accompanying tables, graphics, etc. can be sent. (See the address below.)

If the document includes graphics, tables, drawings, etc., they should ideally be save as separate files on the floppy disk or sent as separate as attachments to the e-mail message, using one of the following formats: .JPG, .BMP, .GIF, .PCX, or .WPG.

Typed/printed submissions should be sent to:

David Dycus
Aichi Shukutoku University
9 Katahira, Nagakute, Nagakute-cho,
Aichi-gun, Aichi-ken 480-11 JAPAN.

Anyone with questions can contact David Dycus at the addresses above, or by FAX at 0568-85-2560 (outside of Japan, that is 81-568-85-2560).

Foreign Language Literacy N-SIG Officers and Contact Information

Charles Jannuzi
Joint Co-ordinator in Charge of Global Networking
Fukui University College of Education,
Bunkyo 3-9-1, Fukui 910, JAPAN
<*jannuzi@edu00.f-edu.fukui-u.ac.jp*>

David Dycus
Joint Co-ordinator and ***Literacy Across Cultures*** Editor
The Department of Studies of Contemporary Society
Aichi Shukutoku University, 9 Katahira, Nagakute, Nagakute-cho,
Aichi-gun, Aichi-ken 480-11, JAPAN
<*dcdycus@asu.aasa.ac.jp*> or <*dcdycus@japan-net.or.jp*>

Bern Mulvey
Joint Co-ordinator in Charge of Membership
Fukui University College of Education,
Bunkyo 3-9-1, Fukui 910, JAPAN
<*mulvey@edu00.f-edu.fukui-u.ac.jp*>

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September, 1998 Volume 2, Number 2

Presentations from the JALT 97 FL Literacy N-SIG Roundtable

Phonemic Awareness: Is It Really Language Specific?

A Key Concept Revisited: Phonemic Awareness

Links to Literacy: The Internet TESL Journal

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Statement of Purpose

Literacy in one's first language (L1) has become essential for virtually anyone wishing to function in most of the modern world. At the same time, growing contact between the world's people has increased the need for foreign language learning and has highlighted the need for a greater understanding of the aspects, processes, development and implications of FL literacy (FLL). The Foreign Language Literacy National Special Interest Group (FLL N-SIG) (presently a provisional special interest group under the auspices of the Japan Association for Language Teaching) seeks to network people, ideas, theory, practice and experiences that can help lead to a better understanding of FLL. In doing so, we aim to move beyond idealized constructs of the L2 and FL learner, and to make clear the differences between L1, L2 and FL literacy practices, processes and theoretical models.

To do this, we seek to encourage locally relevant research into foreign language literacy in Japan and to map out commonalities and differences between features of foreign language literacy in Japan and in other countries. The FLL N-SIG also aims to foster and network study groups and local grassroots linkups with teachers in other countries in order to learn about their situations and needs, and to create greater understanding and mutual cooperation between teachers in different countries and situations.

Foreign Language Literacy N-SIG Officers and Contact Information

Charles Jannuzi
Joint Co-ordinator in Charge of Global Networking
Fukui University College of Education, Bunkyo 3-9-1, Fukui 910-8507, JAPAN
<*jannuzi@edu01.f-edu.fukui-u.ac.jp*>

David Dycus
Joint Co-ordinator and ***Literacy Across Cultures*** Editor
The Department of Studies of Contemporary Society, Aichi Shukutoku University
9 Katahira, Nagakute, Nagakute-cho, Aichi-gun, Aichi-ken 480-11, JAPAN
<*dcdycus@asu.aasa.ac.jp*> or <*dcdycus@japan-net.or.jp*>

Bern Mulvey
Joint Co-ordinator in Charge of Membership
Fukui University College of Education, Bunkyo 3-9-1, Fukui 910-8507, JAPAN
<*mulvey@edu01.f-edu.fukui-u.ac.jp*>

Denise Douglas Brown
Joint Co-ordinator in Charge of Programs
Foreign Language Centre, University of Library and Information Science (ULIS),
1-2 Kasuga, Tsukuba 305, JAPAN
<*ddbrown@ulis.ac.jp*>

FL Literacy: Meeting Needs and Realities in Japan

Presentations from the JALT 97 Foreign Language Literacy N-SIG Roundtable

Speakers: Andy Barfield, David Dycus, Barry Mateer, and Elin Melchior
Moderators: Charles Jannuzi and Bern Mulvey

Introduction

Charles Jannuzi and Bern Mulvey,
Fukui University

What is the modern concept of literacy? Does it involve more than the traditional skills of reading and writing? If literacy is a social, communicative skill, what is its application to using and learning a FL? On 12 October, 1997, at the annual JALT conference, the FL Literacy N-SIG conducted a roundtable and addressed such questions. As is evident from this report from that roundtable, the answers can be found in actual classroom practice that is informed by theory. The following is a report that reflects much of the content and discussion of that roundtable. First, David Dycus gives a succinct but informative overview of what joins and separates L1 and L2 literacies. Next, Andy Barfield details the results of classroom research about types of reading and the difficulties that Japanese EFL students at the university level report. Then Barry Mateer describes an ambitious, holistic, reader response approach that uses graded readers to foster student- and learning-centered activities, such as journals and discussions. Finally, Elin Melchior informs us of some fundamental uses of computers and the Internet to support reading, writing, and L2 literacy: a source for informative but readable texts, a means of writing development through e-mail exchange; and as a time-saving tool to manipulate texts and write practice and comprehension exercises.

FL Literacy: How is it Different from L1 Literacy?

David Dycus, Aichi Shukutoku University

Research and practice in EFL/ESL reading and writing have long been guided by what "good" L1 readers and writers do. However, there is evidence that because of psycholinguistic and cultural factors, lower-level FL/SL readers often approach reading differently. I would like to consider some examples of these differences, especially as they relate to adult Japanese readers of English, using examples from different levels of the "bottom-up/top-down" continuum of language processing and reading strategies commonly accepted in EFL today.

Orthography

For Japanese learners of EFL, differences at "the bottom" begin the moment the eye meets the written symbol. The Japanese writing system involves both a logographic system, *kanji*, and a syllabic system, kana (which includes *hiragana* and *katakana)*. In a logography like *kanji*, the basic graphic unit represents both sound and meaning, and word meaning is often directly accessible without phonological recoding, the conversion of symbol to sound. Conversely, phonological

recoding is essential to access word meaning in syllabic systems like *hiragana* and *katakana* (Koda, 1987; 1997). The English orthographic system lies between these extremes; while one can get to meaning without phonological recoding, it is still often necessary. According to Koda (1997), research shows that different L1 orthographic properties produce qualitatively different word processing and recognition procedures, which in turn affect L2 reading through transfer. Furthermore, difficulties in L2 orthographic processing lead to word misidentification, which negatively affects one's ability to guess the meaning of unknown words from context (see below). Koda concludes that the more orthographies resemble each other the easier they are to process, and argues for explicit instruction in L2 orthographic properties and processing strategies. Considering the fundamental differences between Japanese and English orthographies, these findings indicate the need for more emphasis on phonics instruction and other low-level processing strategies when teaching reading.

Guessing word meaning from context

Next I'd like to discuss a higher-level strategy, guessing word meaning from context. Studies of advanced FL/SL readers consistently show that, like good L1 readers, they learn words through incidental exposure, often use context to successfully guess word meanings, and use multiple strategies to deal with unknown words and other reading difficulties (Laufer, 1997). But beginning and intermediate level FL/SL readers often display very different characteristics. They rely heavily on words as landmarks of meaning, less on background knowledge and virtually ignore syntax. In general, they don't seem to transfer good L1 reading strategies to L2 reading, and they often fail at using context to guess word meanings (Barnett, 1989; Laufer, 1997). A common explanation is that "poor" FL/SL readers don't make use of good reading strategies even though they are aware of them.

However, Laufer (1997) presents evidence showing that the size of the reader's active vocabulary is the key, with a threshold vocabulary of about 5000 lexical items needed before L1 reading strategies like guessing from context can be effectively transferred to L2 reading. From this perspective, we should be placing less emphasis on having lower-level FL/SL readers guess from context in order to learn new words and more on direct vocabulary instruction (Dycus, 1997).

Rhetorical organization strategies

At "the top" of the strategies/processing ladder, in the realm of formal schemata, we encounter cultural differences in rhetorical organization. Most common Japanese rhetorical organization strategies violate the "rules" of the linear organizational style of English. The *kishoutenketsu* strategy allows the writer to add topics and a conclusion unrelated to the introductory topic and discussion. In the *tempura* (inductive) strategy, facts, examples and other support are presented throughout the beginning and middle of the text, but the controlling idea is not introduced until the end. Finally, the *return to baseline theme* rhetorical approach allows the writer to initially introduce an opinion which is repeated throughout but never explained or defended, although seemingly unrelated topics may be discussed at length (Mulvey, 1997). The fundamental differences in the "logical" development of English and Japanese rhetorical organization pose a challenge to our students, and contrastive study of such differences is clearly warranted in our reading and writing classes.

Conclusion

The differences discussed here are just the tip of the iceberg. As far as reading strategies are concerned, we see that bottom-up processes are more important than is often assumed (Paran, 1996). On the other hand, the influence of top-down, culturally determined factors like rhetorical strategies on readers' and writers' expectations and strategies is considerable. Effective approaches to FL/SL

reading instruction must take these factors into account, as well as the fact that becoming a good FL/SL reader and writer involves not only learning language, but also learning to think in new ways, which is seldom easy.

Learner Constructions of Foreign Language Literacy

Andrew Barfield, Foreign Language Center, University of Tsukuba, Japan

To understand better what first-year non-English majors find difficult in reading English, Andy Barfield collected self-reports from an Art and Design reading class over the course of one academic year. In his presentation, he sought to give answers to these recurrent 'teacher' questions:

- What do learners report as difficult when reading graded stories?
- What do learners report as difficult when reading newspaper articles and teenage content-based materials?
- What do learners report as difficult when reading expository prose and academic text?

Because of the difficulties encountered in categorizing the student self-reports and of the lack of any objective measurement, the above results must be treated with caution. In general, the inquiry's main benefit was one of sensitization for both the students and the teacher to the foreign language reading process. Some—not unexpected—general contrasts can nevertheless be briefly mentioned. First, reading graded texts fluently does not require students to activate background knowledge nor deal with complex sentences, whereas reading academic text does. Second, vocabulary inferencing skills seem to take on much greater importance as text difficulty increases. Asking my students to articulate their reading processes has helped both my students to become reflective about their own reading and me to organize better what I do to help them.

Editor's note: A full-length article by Andy Barfield on this topic will be presented in an upcoming issue of LAC.

A Reader Response Approach to Junior High Oral Communication Classes

Barry Mateer, Nihon University's Buzan Junior High School, Japan

In the May 1997 issue of JALT's *The Language Teacher*, an article by Paul Nation (1997) referred to research showing the importance of extensive reading:

> Huang and van Naerssen (1987) found that reading outside class was the most significant predictor of oral communicative ability. Green and Oxford (1995), in a study of the effect of learning strategies on language proficiency, found that reading for pleasure was most strongly related to proficiency to proficiency. Gradman and Hanania (1991) found that out of class reading was the most important direct contributor to TOEFL test performance. (cited in Nation, 1997, p. 15)

These studies clearly indicate that extensive reading can be a major factor in learning another language.

Beginning with second year junior high Oral Communication classes, we use graded readers as the springboard for communication activities in class. The main objective is for students to become comfortable in reading graded readers by becoming more aware of language form, meaning, and use. Students record in journals questions that arise as they compare and contrast what they have learned 'about' English in teacher-centered textbook classes with what they encounter when reading independently. Then, in the classroom, students bring up their recorded observations and questions for discussion.

Journaling as Homework

After a period of introduction and support

in the "how-to's" of journaling, the students are expected to read independently at home and do the following as homework:

- Read the assigned number of pages in the graded reader and attempt to comprehend not only individual words but also whole phrases; comprehend not only individual sentences, but also sentences in relation to surrounding sentences, not translate words, but translate situations through paraphrase.

- The journaling of questions involves the following steps.

1. Write down the complete sentence which triggered a question while reading.
2. Underline the part of the sentence that is the focus of the question (which allows others to see how a person is going about 'chunking' the language).
3. Write the meaning of the sentence as it is now understood, and/or write down the situation/context within the story in which this sentence occurred.
4. Pose a problem / question. This can be either a language question (about the way English is used) or a story question (about the content/context of the story).
5. Write down a possible response to the problem posed.

Introductory Worksheets

As an introductory step before students are expected to do journaling on their own, examples of journaling are presented on worksheets. Frame sentences modeling the language of posing problems are thus presented to students in context. Also possible responses to the posed problems are listed from which learners can choose, not having to create their own answers. Though students are not required to pose problems or solutions at this step, the activity still requires mental activities fundamental to comprehension: raising questions, making inferences, forming hypotheses, predicting, and evoking images. In figure 1 is an example of a worksheet prepared for *Alissa*, a starter level graded reader from Heinemann.

Conclusion

Not only are second year junior high students capable of working within this approach, many of them embrace the chance to engage with the language and its various aspects of form, meaning and use, allowing the students to show a level of awareness, insight and curiosity that more traditional lessons do not so easily encourage.

Using Computers to Attain FL Literacy

Elin Melchior, Komaki English Teaching Center, Japan

Computers have not revolutionized the teaching of literacy; they do not offer any new miraculous techniques. Instead CALL makes what teachers have been doing all along much easier. Some techniques and projects that many gave up on because they were too time-consuming and labor-intensive are now not only feasible but easy to undertake with the aid of computers. Computers can help teachers find reading texts, provide real English contexts, and greatly facilitate mechanical reading exercises.

Tailored Texts

Tailoring reading texts to students is of vital importance. I realized how serious this problem is while I was talking to a junior high school English teacher last year. She said, "I understand how to teach listening and speaking, but since reading and writing aren't communicative, I don't know how I should teach these subjects." I understand exactly how she came to this faulty conclusion because there is very little reading in textbooks which communicates anything students want to know. As someone with a profound love of reading, I find this very sad.

Teachers can, of course, find reading texts off-line, but this is not always easy to do in Japan. I constantly use the internet to supplement my courses. Teaching current events

classes, I often find holes in *The Daily Yomiuri's* coverage of the news while *Newsweek* is too difficult and a little late. On the Internet I can find easier texts almost immediately after an event—the *Washington Post* page often yields good results. When I taught the movie *Rain Man*, I found information on autism at the National Association for Autism's home page. These searches generally take me less time than it used to take me to walk to the library when I taught in the U.S. It also gives me great pleasure to encourage student reading by supplying them with articles in English about their special interests — whether they be River Phoenix, Namie Amuro, or Area 51.

Writing Exchanges via E-mail

Writing exchanges are another wonderful technique which can now be conducted in a timely fashion through e-mail. Writing something and sending it to someone else to read gives students a sense of consequence that they do not usually feel when only the teacher reads their writing. More formal exchanges of opinions and other types of information as well as simple getting-to-know-you letters make e-mail projects appropriate for all levels of students. I have noticed that when reading pieces of writing which have been exchanged with other students, my students automatically follow many reading strategies (such as skimming) which do not seem to come naturally during textbook reading.

Mechanically Manipulating Text

Mechanical reading exercises, such as scrambled paragraphs, timed reading, and paced reading, can be done very easily on the computer. I think paced reading is a wonderful thing and I have seen people teach it without the computer—but it so easy to do on the computer and so difficult without. A good CALL reading program will allow the teacher to scan and import (input) texts, and will also offer a dictionary (so students can click on unknown words and get a definition), cloze exercises, scrambled sentences and paragraphs, timed and paced reading, hidden text, a scoring mechanism and a way to print results and problem areas.

Conclusion

As I said at the beginning none of these activities are revolutionary, many teachers have been using them all along; however, the computer helps teachers utilize them quickly and efficiently allowing more time to devote to other aspects of teaching.

Conclusion

Bern Mulvey and Charles Jannuzi,
Fukui University, Japan

We think the most important result of the roundtable was the exploring and re-defining of the term "FL Literacy." As a newer N-SIG in JALT, it is essential that we continue to delineate who and what we are with respect to other groups both within and outside of JALT, and that we continue to stake out a place for ourselves that is neither too narrow to be exclusionary or too broad as to be meaningless. As the presentations and their reports made clear, by "FL literacy," we are not referring just to traditional conceptions of being literate but also to the broader ramifications of what becoming literate in a foreign language entails: that is, the special cultural and cross-linguistic challenges that monolingual native speakers never have to face.

In this increasingly electronic and international age, when so much conversation has been removed from the oral arena and placed squarely into our e-mail program's in-box, one's ability to both read and understand that electronic correspondence has become critical. Are our FL students prepared for this? How ready are we as teachers to help prepare them? It is these issues we have tried to bring up and illuminate in some of their myriad aspects through this roundtable.

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Figure 1 A Sample Worksheet for the Heinemann Graded Reader, *Alissa.*

1. Her father calls to her.
   Does "calls to her" mean "calls her name"?
   (Does ____ mean _____?)
2. She reads all day.
   Instead of "all day" is "every day" also okay?
   (Instead of ____ is _____ okay?)
3. There isn't any work here in the village?
   How are "work" and "job" different?
   (How are ____ and ____ different?)
4. They drive to a house.
   Is Alissa driving the car?
   How do you translate " drive "?
5. Alissa goes into the room. The room is small and dark. (Please rewrite this sentence)
   Alissa ____ ____ a _____. _____ room.
6. Here face is hot and red?
   Does that mean (_____ _____ _____)
   (Does that mean.....?)
7. Alissa is angry (_____ _____ _____) and afraid (_____ _____ _____).
8. (___ ___ ___ so she cries every night (___ ___ ___)

(she is angry) (with her father) (of the man) (she is unhappy) (in her room)

Phonemic Awareness: Is It Language Specific?

Brett Reynolds

Sakuragaoka Girls' Jr. & Sr. High School
Japan

The question of whether phonological awareness is language specific or not is a crucial one if one is to make informed decisions about teaching it. In the first language (L1) reading acquisition literature, the general consensus is to teach it early and explicitly (Adams, 1990). But whether we can transfer this directly to second language (L2) instruction is not clear. In the last issue of LAC, Jannuzi (1998) suggested that EFL students

> "must: (1) learn and / or acquire an adequate interlanguage phonology that compensates for the lack of native competence and THEN learn and/or acquire the phonemic awareness... Indeed, it could be logically concluded that effective phonemic awareness training can not precede the development of a sufficient, internalized interlanguage phonology" (p. 8).

This paper will argue a different view; that once one has acquired a given level of phonological awareness in one language, it is possible to transfer that understanding to any other languages.

Phonological awareness is generally considered to be a unitary construct which appears to be made up of a hierarchy of different sized phonological units (Gough, Larson, & Yopp, 1996). It is generally agreed to subsume syllabic awareness, sub-syllabic awareness (onset and rime[1]), and segmental (phonemic) awareness. As phonemic awareness seems to be the most crucial for learning to read English, it will be the main focus of this paper. Taking the definition offered by Jannuzi (1998), phonemic awareness is "a verifiable insight that one's *native or non-native* language can be broken down into sounds and sound combinations" [original emphasis] (p. 8).

The importance of phonemic awareness has become almost axiomatic in the literature on L1 reading acquisition and dyslexia (for an overview, see Adams, 1990). Bryant and Goswami have said, "the discovery of a strong relationship between children's phonological awareness and their progress in learning to read is one of the great successes of modern psychology" (1987, p. 439). This insight is seen as fundamental to grasping the alphabetic principle. On the other hand, phonemic awareness is rarely mentioned in the TEFL and SLA literature. Despite this, the idea that phonology—not just good pronunciation—is important for foreign languages is not a new one. Carroll and Sapon (1959) included a number of measures of phonology in their modern language aptitude test. Among these are some tests of ability to decode written texts. More recently, researchers have begun to consider the role of phonology in L2 learning of vocabulary (N. Ellis, 1996), L2 reading, (Harrington, & Sawyer, 1992), and L2 learning disabilities (Sparks, Ganschow and their colleagues, 1992, 1993, 1997).

Unfortunately, the majority of the research on phonemic awareness has been done with children learning to read English as their L1. There is also a smaller body of research dealing with children learning to read other languages as their L1 (e.g. Mann 1986; Lundberg, Frost, and Peterson, 1988). There

are, however, only a few studies dealing specifically with phonemic awareness in the L2 (e.g. Allan, 1997). Given that phonology varies from language to language, more such studies are definitely needed. The lack of such information leaves us with the question of whether phonological awareness is language specific or not.

Does phonemic awareness include phonemic discrimination?

Jannuzi (1998; also see Byrne & Fielding-Barnsley 1991) seems to argue that phonemic awareness is language specific. He proposes that EFL learners can not receive effective phonemic awareness training until they have an adequate interlanguage phonology. Unfortunately, no elaboration of "adequate" is offered, although the concept seems to minimally include the ability to distinguish between sounds like /r/ and /l/ and go beyond the phonology that learners bring with them to the study of a new language. Yet there is another view that as long as one is able to understand that such phonemes exist, and that words and syllables contain them, the question of exactly what phonemes they are is extraneous to phonemic awareness as an essential component of alphabetic literacy. If this is the case, then phonemic awareness would be language independent.

Ganschow, Sparks and colleagues (1992) state that their

> "use of the term phonology does not refer primarily to ones (sic) ability to pronounce words either in the native or foreign language. It may include pronunciation but refers specifically to ones (sic) ability to learn sound (phoneme)/symbol (grapheme) correspondences, discriminate between sounds, and make explicit reports about sound segments in words. This later skill, (is) known as phonemic awareness" (pp. 57-58).

Thus, they clearly distinguish between phonemic awareness and phonemic discrimination, both of which they lump together under term phonology. Evidence that phonemic awareness can develop with an inadequate phonology comes from people who have been profoundly deaf from birth. Despite this obstacle, "the young deaf child often develops metalinguistic, phonological awareness on an underdeveloped phonological system" (Campbell & Burden, 1995).

The idea that phonemic discrimination is a separate construct from phonemic awareness is further supported by a number of studies (Yopp, 1988; Stanovich, Cunningham, & Cramer, 1984; Gough, Larson, & Yopp, 1996). In one of these, Yopp administered a number of different phonemic awareness tests, including an auditory discrimination test (Wepman, 1973), a phoneme blending test (Roswell-Chall, 1959), a phoneme counting test (I. Liberman et al., 1974), two phoneme deletion tests (Bruce, 1964; Rosner, 1975), a rhyming test (Yopp, 1988), two phoneme segmentation tests (Goldstein, 1974; Yopp-Singer, 1984), a sound isolation test (Yopp, 1988), and a number of others. The results of the tests were all significantly intercorrelated except Wepman's auditory discrimination test, which had a low positive correlation. Similar results in the other studies mentioned above indicate that phoneme discrimination seems to be related to, but separate from, phonological awareness.

Another reason to doubt that phonemic discrimination is a prerequisite for phonemic awareness is the modular nature of the phonemic identification process. Alvin Liberman (1995) argues convincingly that there is a phonemic identification module. Two central characteristics of modular systems is that they are informationally encapsulated and autonomous (Fodor, 1983, p. 37). This would indicate processes which are beyond the conscious control of the individual. Yet, metalinguistic concepts are, by definition, ideas of which the individual can conceive and deliberate. While knowledge of a language's phonemes is linguistic knowledge, phonemic awareness is metalinguistic in nature. Metalinguistic knowledge is largely transfer-

able to any new language. For example, the awareness that there are parts of speech (nouns, verbs, etc.) in one's L1 can assist in learning L2, in that it helps the student know what to look for. The knowledge that one can employ humor and sarcasm, or represent speech in print are all forms of metalinguistic knowledge that one can easily apply to any other language, regardless of one's ability to perform the tasks.

Thus, it seems highly unlikely that an adequate interlanguage phonology must be developed before phonemic awareness training can begin. In fact, even those with severely limited phonology, may benefit from phonemic awareness training. If phonemic awareness can exist without an "adequate" L2 phonology, there is no reason to believe that it is language specific.

When to teach

Having concluded that one need not wait for an adequate interlanguage phonology to emerge, the question then becomes when to teach phonemic awareness. In the L1 reading acquisition literature, there seems to be broad agreement that it needs to be taught as soon as possible (Adams, 1990). Similarly, Ganschow, Sparks, and colleagues (1992) suggest that improving students' L1 phonological awareness before L2 instruction begins, and teaching L2 phonological awareness early in L2 instruction are both useful interventions for students who exhibit phonological difficulties.

A number of large scale longitudinal studies indicate that phonological awareness is teachable in one's L1, and is teachable at very young ages—even before students begin to read (Blachman, 1994; Lundberg, Frost, & Peterson, 1988). The same studies show significant positive effects of such training on later reading ability. In an L2 study, Reynolds (in preparation) has found that teaching English letter-sound correspondences to first and second year Japanese junior high school students resulted in significant improvements in phonological, and specifically phonemic, awareness. The students scored higher on a test of phonological awareness (Reynolds, 1997) than high school students with four more years of English instruction. Thus, it appears that both early L1 and L2 instruction are likely to result in improvements in phonological awareness.

How to teach

Using minimal pairs to improve phonemic awareness is likely to prove unproductive. Illiterates easily distinguish minimal pairs in their L1, yet show no phonemic awareness (Adams, 1990; Morais, Cary, Alegria, & Bertelson, 1979). There are, however, a number of easy, enjoyable ways to teach it to Japanese students in either their L1 or L2.

One way is by using concrete representations of the individual phonemes. This can be done by having students put down a tile or other marker for each sound they hear in a word.

兎さん = /usagisan/ = 8 sounds (phonemes) = 8 tiles

speed = /spid/ = 4 sounds (phonemes) = 4 tiles

Exploiting the layout of the kana chart with rows organized by vowel and columns organized mainly by consonant, can also be enlightening to students. Coloring the kana half one colour for consonant sounds and half another colour for vowel sounds is even more clear, especially for younger children (e.g. coloured Fidel kana charts, Gattegno, 1972). Using *romaji* (Roman letters) can also be a useful way of showing that (/ka/) is made up of two sounds /k/ and /a/. These are good ways to overcome the fact that Japanese has a predominantly logographic and syllabic orthography, not an alphabetic one.

These techniques should be supplemented by training students to isolate, segment, and combine phonemes. Teaching alliteration and rhyme is a good way to start. Sesame Street type blending activities are also ideal.

Ssss...Aaaa... Nnn..., SssAaaNnn, SAN!

C..... AT, C...AT, C..AT, CAT!

Reynolds (to appear) presents a wide variety of short, interesting activities that can be done with beginning students.

Caveats

While phonological awareness seems to be largely language independent, there are a few traps to be aware of. These points are mainly of interest for teachers and researchers, as they concern the testing of phonological awareness. Because of its regular V or CV syllables and its writing system, Japanese is not a good language in which to assess phonemic awareness. However, if one is testing Japanese speakers using English words, the following points need to be kept in mind.

Diphthongs and affricates

What is considered to be a diphthong in one language, may be viewed as two separate vowels in another. The /ai/ in the English "high" is a diphthong, while in Japanese, the /ai/ in *hai* considered to be two distinct vowels. Similarly, an affricate in one language may be two independent consonants in another (consider the English consonant cluster /ts/ in "cats" and the Japanese affricate /ts/ in *tsunami*). This is largely a matter of semantics and linguistic bias. Thus, while learners who identify only three sounds in "cats" or fully four in "cheese" should be disabused of this idea, they clearly understand the important concept and should be considered to have answered a question of this nature correctly.

Syllables

Even within the English L1 community, there is often disagreement over where syllable boundaries lie, and occasionally even about how many how many syllables a word contains (beer vs. bi/yer; dic/tion/e/ry vs. dic/tion/ry). Thus, the definition of a syllable is slippery, and often cultural. Teachers should keep this in mind, both when teaching and testing syllabic awareness.

Conclusion

Phonological awareness seems to be language independent. Once it has been acquired, it is likely transferable to any new languages learned. This is not to say that language specific phonology, including phoneme discrimination is not important, simply that it is not part of the construct known as phonological awareness and may not be crucial for understanding the alphabetic principle. Furthermore, it seems that, for students who lack phonological awareness, there is no need to delay teaching it. In fact, there is a strong feeling that it should be taught as soon as possible. Lastly, in assessing and teaching students, teachers and researchers need to remember that some language specific aspects of phonology may still be relevant considerations.

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[1] This spelling is conventionally used in reading literature when referring to the phonological unit. Thus, a rhyme for bat is cat, but its rime is /æt/.

Brett Reynolds can be contacted at Sakuragaoka Girls' Jr/Sr High School, Tokyo, Japan and by e-mail at <patch@twics.com>. Readers are also invited to visit his homepage at http://eslsv001.esl.sakuragaoka.ac.jp/teachers/BR/

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A Key Concept Revisited: Phonemic Awareness

Charles Jannuzi
Fukui University, Japan
<jannuzi@ThePentagon.com>

One of my motives in writing the Key Concept article on phonemic awareness in the February, 1998 issue of *Literacy Across Cultures* (Jannuzi, 1998, pp. 7-12) was to point out just how neglected such important issues often are in mainstream applied linguistics (AL), second language acquisition (SLA) studies, and theoretical, university-based ELT. (AL and SLA are the two prestige fields of academic inquiry most said to underlie ELT theoretically and provide its empirical research base; they are almost always university-based.) By discussing what was mostly a concept from the discourse of native literacy, I hoped to raise consciousness and foster reflective debate in the discourse of ELT.

I am glad Brett Reynolds took exception enough with my piece to provide us with his own thought-provoking contribution about the topic. I also realize that it is true of much writing in academic ELT and education that one is often cited in someone else's paper only so that the citing author can disagree with or at least complicate the work cited. We often seek to affirm the validity of our own views through the selective interpretation, negation, invalidation, and forced revision of the views of others. Still, I must admit that my first article, being preliminary, was sometimes tentative and even sketchy in its synthesis, and also that I sometimes struggled for clarity in my attempts to reconcile literacy and ELT conceptions of things. Therefore, I welcome Reynolds' criticisms and corrections.

I DO think that if a reader reviews my previous article on phonemic awareness, they will be struck more by the amount of agreement than disagreement that holds across my article and Reynolds'. Although from reading Reynolds it would be easy to conclude that we are at odds over some important issues, I welcome this opportunity to revisit and expand on the concept of phonemic awareness.

If I have read Reynolds' paper with comprehension, it seems to me that there are three points which we need to come to an agreement on or agree to disagree:

(1) Is phonological and/or phonemic awareness language specific?
(2) Are phonemic awareness and phonemic discrimination separate constructs, and even if separate, are they related?
(3) In FL and SL contexts, is the L2 phonology best taught before, along with, or after phonological and/or phonemic awareness?

Issue 1: Is phonological and/or phonemic awareness language specific?

Semantically and logically, a phonology and its phonemics are always language specific. The phonology of English is not the phonology of Japanese; none of the phonemes of English are the same as the phonemes of Japanese (though phonetically speaking some are similar).

Also, a distinction is made between normal language processing and a meta-linguistic ability to manipulate the language for, among others, the purposes of reading and writing it. Normal language processing is the expected outcome of acquiring a native

language. Metalinguistic skills for the purposes of reading and writing are a prerequisite for and/or a product of successful literacy learning and/or acquisition and probably in some way (causally or epiphenomenally) underlie beginning reading. Possibly, they can be taught for effective pre-reading and remedial reading instruction. Analogous metalinguistic skills may well be the key to learning a second or foreign language because (1) teaching of them relies heavily on written texts and (2) second or foreign languages are not naturally acquired, but rather taught and learned.

When this overlayering of skills proceeds smoothly from native language development to native language literacy, the two—natural language ability and an ability to manipulate and think about it in a metacognitive way—seem to fit together so completely and naturally that, at a popular, folkloric level, they are taken to be one in the same. An ability with the native language is the ability to read, write, and analyze the standard written dialect. Mispellings are thought to reveal stupidity or laziness. Native language arts or university English Composition are called "language study." Or so many of the popular beliefs go. Even in some of the literature on literacy, models of language processing include phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, and other metalinguistic abilities.

Normal language processing is said to characterize native language ability; just how normal or different second or foreign language processing might be is a matter of much psycholinguistic debate. Certainly, normal native language processing, metalinguistic manipulation of it, and L2 language processing all tax on-line working memory. A lack of working memory—perhaps a neurological phenomenon—might help account for why some native speakers of one language do not (1) learn literacy in the native language (often a standard written dialect that can be quite a bit different from the native spoken form) and/or (2) gain competence or fluency of any sort in L2.

Success in transferring a metalinguistic ability at manipulating a native language to L2 learning necessarily depends logically enough on success at learning the L2. How can one metalinguistically manipulate a language one does not have? Also, it is still an unknown whether in learning an L2 successfully, a new set of metalinguistic skills develops independently, or transfers from the ability to manipulate the native language, or a mix of both. (I think seriously that the idea of a mix of both is closest to reality, and the point strikes home when I reflect on my successes and failures at learning Japanese and becoming literate in it.)

In the case of Japanese learners of EFL (who typically start English study as 7th graders in middle or junior high school), a number of scenarios are possible and worth considerable reflection. First, when Japanese students learn to read and write their native language in a roman alphabet in the fifth grade of elementary school, is a specific type of phonological or phonemic awareness training necessary? Second, do these students come to have phonological or phonemic awareness as a consequence from learning to use a roman alphabet to represent their native Japanese? Third, if no specific phonological or phonemic training is necessary, is it because they are already "aware" as a result of some other input or stimulus—such as becoming literate in Japanese as it is usually written (with a mix of logograms, syllabaries, and some roman alphabet)? Fourth, if Japanese students are "aware" enough to read and write Japanese using a roman alphabet, do they transfer the skill to learning EFL at the junior high level? If not, why not? Because the awareness necessary for reading a relatively straightforward phonemic script (such as Japanese in a roman alphabet) does not easily transfer to reading and manipulating written English ? (Written English uses a mixed alphabetic writing system with phonetic, phonemic, morphophonemic, morphemic, logographic, and even federal elements.) Or is it because, if not in an abstract sense at least from a pragmatic perspective, being metalinguistically aware of English phonology and phonemics and capable of manipulating them for reading and

writing requires also learning some of what one is supposed to be aware of?

Issue 2: Are phonemic awareness and phonemic discrimination separate constructs, and even if separate, are they related?

Reynolds takes me to task for somehow confusing the two constructs. First, let me emphasize, if both are research constructs, they may or may not accurately reflect psychological and psycholinguistic reality in the cognition and metacognition of real people. Second, all of the research Reynolds cites merely shows that as research constructs, phonemic discrimination is not a good measure of the other types of phonological awareness measured by researchers. So what? I never argued that they were not separate constructs. That does not mean that they are in reality totally unrelated or that phonemic discrimination— as a part of either phonological processing or phonological awareness— is not important for learning a FL and learning to read and write it. Phonological discrimination, in a FL, may reflect a phonological processing ability, it may reflect a type of phonological awareness, or some of both.

When I stated that we can use minimal pair words to become more conscious of phonemes, I never said "aware" of them for the purposes of segmenting words into sounds and the like. I was only pointing out that we can isolate phonemes without recourse to a special alphabet (e.g. IPA) by using minimal pair words. The conventional writing system of English uses 26 letters in various, overlapping combinations, major and minor patterns, and phonograms to represent over 40 sounds and so is therefore inadequate for using one symbol to write one sound. For example, the words "watch" and "watt" are a minimal pair, different only in their final consonant sound, though it would be difficult to explain this from the spelling conventions.

Moreover, we can, both in theory and practice, usefully posit a relationship between the two concepts that Reynolds wants to separate, both for research and pedagogical purposes. Morais (1991) is quite clear about that relationship: problems in auditory discrimination amongst native speakers lead to difficulties in the phonemic and/or phonetic segmentation of speech, which leads to problems in phonological recoding for the purposes of reading comprehension. Such auditory discrimination and coding problems are viscerally well known to anyone who has ever tried to learn and communicate in a FL. The major deficiency in recent communicative ELT is that they seem most often to be treated as minor problems for articulation practice and accent reduction, if treated at all.

Also, the model from L2 learning research that Reynolds cites in support of the idea that phonemic discrimination and phonemic awareness are distinct and mostly unrelated (because for Reynolds the former is language specific and the latter is supposed to be a cross-linguistic universal?) would seem more to contradict Reynolds, not me, because for Ganschow, Sparks, Javorsky, and Patton (1992, cited in Reynolds, 1998) the term "phonology" as a unified construct encompasses and links both phonemic discrimination and segmentation skills. It is perhaps doubly ironic because (1) I disagree with Ganschow, Sparks, et al. (1992) on what "phonology" is, unless their purpose was to come up with a special use of the term for the purpose of a model of non- native language reading, and (2) it is confusing to use a source one disagrees with essentially to disagree with someone else who used the source first to disagree with you!

Clearly, the research, as inconclusive, incomplete, and open to multiple interpretations as it is, does not disprove a possible link, and this includes, by extension, EFL learners. Standardized tests, diagnostic tools, and research constructs that attempt to deal with and measure phonological processing (as a part of a more general language processing ability) for the purposes of reading and listening comprehension include discrimination tasks, and difficulties with such

tasks have been correlated with reading and language processing difficulties in many native speakers (Truch, 1991, p. 54).

Discrimination of phonemes may not correlate strongly with other types of phonemic awareness for the purpose of measuring the latter—i.e. discrimination as constructed by researchers is not a refined measure of other types of awareness as constructed by researchers—but that does not mean real aural discrimination is not a phonological awareness skill or that it is unimportant or unrelated to success at reading or listening in a foreign language. Indeed, Truch (1991) recommends a particular diagnostic and remedial reading program (and one that might have important implications for EFL reading and is, to a certain extent, already being used for ESL purposes in North America) that is centered on development of auditory discrimination skills, a program called the Auditory Discrimination in Depth (ADD) Program (pp. 68-81).

Issue 3: In FL and SL contexts, is the L2 phonology best taught before, along with, or after phonological and/or phonemic awareness?

Reynolds says that our disagreements and/or misunderstandings lead us to important differences over recommended instructional strategies. But in my original piece I offered a model whereby instruction of interlanguage phonology development, phonological awareness of it (and its phonemic awareness subcomponent), and phonics skills can proceed apace. In the case of EFL in Japan, phonological awareness (e.g. phonemic or phonetic segmentation skills) might be handled when students learn the roman alphabet for their native language. Or it might naturally result from learning to read and write regular written Japanese (which, as I've already stated, does include some roman letters). In either case, such awareness does not have to be addressed in the EFL class, except to confirm its existence. Or its lack—if it does not exist or is not evinced by the EFL learners, then, just as I wrote in the original piece, phonology, metalinguistic phonological awareness, and phonics skills will all need to be addressed at the beginning level.

Moreover, I fail to see the conflict between my model as stated in the first paper—with its call for teaching in EFL that addresses (1) interlanguage phonology development, (2) phonological awareness, and (3) phonics skills together—and Reynolds' finding "that teaching English letter-sound correspondences to first and second year Japanese junior high school students resulted in significant improvements in phonological, and specifically phonemic, awareness (unpublished data, cited in Reynolds, 1998, p. 3)".

Reynolds feels I have fudged on just what is sufficient in the phonological part of this general language/interlanguage ability. I assert that for my Japanese EFL students it lies somewhere in between, on the one hand, (1) mentally (mis)representing the sound system of English and its written analog with the relatively simple, open vowel and consonant-vowel syllables of Japanese and, on the other, (2) being able to perform with and manipulate the sound system as a normal native, fluently literate speaker of English would. Almost none of my students have ever gotten anywhere close to the latter part of this spectrum, but since English phonology and phonetics have been so neglected on modern syllabuses, it is hard to say just what is in the realm of the possible.

I am struck by an incident that illustrates this point that occurred today, just before revising this paper, in a university EFL composition class of English and Education majors. Some students could not understand my explanations of who Martin Luther King was. Finally, after telling them all about this great man and being met with only perplexed looks, I pronounced his name as it would be in Japanese: KI-N-GU (two or three syllables, depending on your definition of a syllable; three beats of Japanese speech rhythm; four Japanese sounds, none of them English

ones). "Ahhh. Kingu-sensei!" came the chorus of comprehension ('sensei' is a Japanese title for teacher, leader, respected one).

Conclusion

Despite all that our two pieces share and complement each other on, Reynolds and I, it would seem, have disagreed on three issues:

(1) Is phonological and/or phonemic awareness language specific?
(2) Are phonemic awareness and phonemic discrimination separate constructs, and even if separate, are they related?
(3) In FL and SL contexts, is the L2 phonology best taught before, along with, or after phonological and/or phonemic awareness?

On issue one, I find it hard to come to an agreement with Reynolds, mostly on logical and semantic grounds. I fail to see how someone can be fully phonologically aware and able to manipulate a sound system one has not sufficiently acquired and/or learned. Certainly, some metalinguistic skills may transfer across all languages, but not nearly all of the ones measured and isolated and said to underlie the learning of and literacy in the L2.

Some lines of research are now pursuing metalinguistic abilities in syntactic awareness as being relevant to reading ability. Following Reynolds' reasoning, I would like to know how EFL students are going to be aware of, for example, grammaticality or word order violations (two measures of metalinguistic syntactical awareness), if they know little or no English syntax. I think the same holds for phonology (which includes phonemics and phonetics). How can one metalinguistically reflect on and fluently manipulate a language one does not process, at any level—phonetic/phonemic/phonological, morphological, syntactical, semantic, or pragmatic?

On issue two, I think I have resolved or at least clarified our disagreement. I never argued that the many types of phonemic awareness measured by researchers and phonemic discrimination are the same thing or that they are refined measures of each other. The fact that phonemic discrimination is a separate construct does not, however, mean that it is completely unrelated to the others or that it is—as either part of a larger phonological processing skill or as a metalinguistic awareness skill—unimportant to L2 language development and reading and listening comprehension.

With issue three, it seems misleading to me that Reynolds should criticize my call for addressing three separate but interrelated components—interlanguage phonological development, metalinguistic awareness of it, and phonics skills—and then proceed to describe a recommended procedure which is in agreement with it.

My understanding of the abundant literature on metalinguistic skills for the purpose of native language literacy is that there is no clear consensus on such terms as phonemic and phonological awareness. With most people, a native language can be said to be naturally acquired. Literacy, however much it is conflated at a popular level with language ability, is not a "natural" process, though there are very important linguistic elements to it. This would seem to help account for why metalinguistic and metacognitive skills underlie learning, gaining mastery of and using literacy skills for communicating with a written language.

Learning a foreign or second language also is not a very natural thing to do (as my students remind me constantly), in this way analogies to literacy learning may be very strong. It might be the case that the sort of metalinguistic and metacognitive skills and abilities that Reynolds and I have argued about and attempted to clarify are the key to learning and mastering a foreign language—to an extent not yet acknowledged or understood in the fields of SLA, AL, and mainstream TESOL/ELT. Certainly, the parallels are easy to state: native literacy often requires learning a written (often quite divergent) dialect of the native language; SL/FL instruction is based quite extensively on written texts. However much Reynolds and I may have disagreed on some issues, there is

obviously much that needs to be explored in all of our research and teaching concerning the connections that hold across literacy, L2 learning, and metalinguistic skills development.

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Charles Jannuzi can be contacted at Fukui University College of Education, Bunkyo 3-9-1, Fukui 910, JAPAN, and by Email at *<jannuzi@edu01.f-edu.fukui-u.ac.jp>* or *<jannuzi@ThePentagon.com>*.

Join Us During JALT 98 at Sonic City

Friday, November 20th to Monday, November 23rd
Sonic City, Omiya, Saitama, Japan

As a forming group, the main business of the FLL N-SIG is attracting people interested in issues about reading, writing, and FL literacy. As a kind of self-introduction, the Foreign Language Literacy NSIG will use its Annual General Meeting (AGM) time slot to moderate an open discussion on "Reading and Writing Pedagogy: What Works and What Doesn't With Japanese Students." Bring your ideas and questions, meet others who share your interests, and share your experiences with us— tell us what works for you!

What: Open discussion on reading and writing pedagogy
When: 6:30-7:15, Sunday, Nov. 22nd
Where: Sonic City, Room 805

And while you're at it..
SIGN UP FOR THE FL LITERACY N-SIG MEMBERSHIP CONTEST!!!!

Current FL Literacy N-SIG members, JALT members who join the FLL N-SIG at JALT 98, and conference goers who join both JALT and our N-SIG can register for our membership contest. Stop by the N-SIG's table (Room 403) at JALT 98 and register. The drawing will be held during our AGM meeting, Sunday, Nov. 22nd between 6:30 and 7:15 p.m. in Room 805.

Prizes

First prize for PC owners— Readability 2000 software for PCs.
First prize for MAC owners— Readability 2000 for MACs.
Second Prize— One copy of *Extensive Reading in the Second Language Classroom* by Richard Day and Julian Bamford
Third Prizes (2)— Reimbursement of the ¥1500 N-SIG membership fee for two winners.

The Internet TESL Journal
<http://www.aitech.ac.jp/~iteslj/>

by David Dycus
<dcdycus@japan-net.or.jp> or *<dcdycus@asu.aasa.ac.jp>*

The *Internet TESL Journal* (ITESLJ) is a combination monthly WWW publication and TESL/TEFL teaching materials site. On line since 1996, it has accumulated a growing archive of research articles, position papers, teaching tips and activities, quizzes, and a large collection of links to TESL/TEFL sites, and constantly presents new material in its monthly journal. It is open to all contributors and contains a refreshingly wide variety of materials from teachers around the world, ranging from statistic-filled research papers to short grammar and vocabulary quizzes.

The people who maintain the site have wisely chosen to abide by the "KISS" principle, presenting material in basic HTML. Those with slow modems and older computers and will appreciate the focus on content over flashy presentation. Visitors wanting those eye-catching but big, memory-hungry multimedia productions will have to go elsewhere, but can do so easily by following the extensive list of links. There is something for everyone at this site, with more coming all the time because the site actively solicits contributions from its readers.

Below are descriptions of articles and materials dealing with reading and/or writing instruction that may be of interest to ***Literacy Across Cultures*** readers. They are roughly organized by content and then listed chronologically.

Research Articles

Teaching Japanese-English Bilingual Children to Read English at Home
Craig Smith (December 1996)
<http://www.aitech.ac.jp/~iteslj/Articles/Smith-Bilingual.html>

This is a position paper on how to best help bilingual children become biliterate as well. The writer presents relevant research (in bilingualism, reading instruction, and the phonics vs. whole language debate), but draws more heavily the experiences of children learning to be bilingual, presented in three case studies of children he tutored. He concludes that parents should depend less on the "expert" advice of literacy gurus and more on the same family policies and practices which led their children to be bilingual.

Gender Differences in Taiwan Business Writing Errors
Judy F. Chen (October 1996)
<http://www.aitech.ac.jp/~iteslj/Articles/Chen-GenderDifs/>

This article reports the results of a computer-based study of the writing of male and female students in Taiwan. It first discusses how computers can be integrated into writing classes so that teachers can gain a better understanding of students' abilities and progress. Next, it presents results of a study (made possible by the use of computer-based writing instruction) of gender differences in student writing errors, which indicates that female students consistently make fewer errors, and show more improvement over time, than their male classmates.

Chicken Meets on Rise: Meaning in Decline Lexical Havoc in L2
Yvonne Stapp (April 1997)
<http://www.aitech.ac.jp/~iteslj/Articles/Stapp-Bloopers.html>

This article presents examples of learner errors caused by lexical confusions, direct translations, similar-sounding words, and

phonological problems. It is informative but highly entertaining as well because the examples of learners' mistakes demonstrate how seemingly small errors can have a devastating effect on meaning.

A Product-Focused Approach to Text Summarisation
Esther Uso Juan and Juan Carlos Palmer Silveira (January 1998)
<http://www.aitech.ac.jp/~iteslj/Articles/Juan-TextSummary.html>

In this study of summary writing, an intermediate and advanced group of Spanish students of English were asked to read a short passage and to write summaries of it. The intermediate level had a set of summary-writing instructions that were explained by the teacher before starting the task, while Group B did not receive any guidance. The researchers observed that L2 proficiency strongly affected the summarising task; the advanced group did well despite knowing little about summary writing. They also found that the lower proficiency group clearly benefitted from having guidelines on summary writing.

Gender Differences in E-mail Communication
Paolo Rossetti (July 1998)
<http://www.aitech.ac.jp/~iteslj/Articles/Rossetti-GenderDif.html>

The implications of gender differences on language use are explored in this article, based on a total of 100 randomly selected e-mail discussion group messages written on a wide range of topics. It begins with a discussion of general issues in language and gender and of gender in e-mail communication, followed by a study of e-mail samples analyzed based on Herring's (1994) aggressive/male, supportive/female dichotomy. The results show a clear gender difference in styles in e-mail messages, with males "more prone to write in an aggressive, competitive style, while women tend to be far more supportive in their writing."

Lesson Plans, Activities, and Teaching Techniques

Vocabulary Teaching Using Student-Written Dialogues
Alice Dana Delaney Walker (Vol. 1, No. 2, December 1995)
<http://www.aitech.ac.jp/~iteslj/Techniques/Walker-StudentDialogs.html>

An easy to use teaching technique for using student-generated dialogues as a way of reviewing vocabulary is presented here.

CNN Interactive: Reading, Discussing and Writing
Amy Ogasawara (December 1995)
<http://www.aitech.ac.jp/~iteslj/Lessons/Ogasawara-CNN.html>

A sample lesson plan for teaching college freshmen (TOFEL scores from 425 to 475) using CNN Interactive(http://www.cnn.com) and e-mail, with an eye to increasing awareness of issues in world news, as well as developing critical reading ability and the ability to write critical reactions.

A Peer Review Activity for Essay Organization
Bob Gibson (March 1996)
<http://www.aitech.ac.jp/~iteslj/Techniques/Gibson-PeerReview.html>

This article offers a variation on peer review of essays that, by maintaining the anonymity of both the writer and reviewer, reduces the tension peer review can involve. The activity focuses students' attention on the value of well-written topic sentences at the paragraph or on thesis statements at the essay level.

Teaching the English Newspaper Effectively
Kenji Kitao (March 1996)
<http://www.aitech.ac.jp/~iteslj/Lessons/Kitao-Newspaper.html>

After establishing the importance of English newspaper articles for students, the author presents ways to teach learners to recognize the way newspapers and articles in them are organized, and offers suggestions for helping readers understand the writer's objective and for critical reading. It includes a sample worksheet.

How to Read Nonfictional English Texts Faster and More Effectively: A 'Standard Reading Exercise' for ESL-Students
Helmut Stiefenhoumlfer (June 1996)
<http://www.aitech.ac.jp/~iteslj/Techniques/Stiefenhoefer-FastReading.html>

This article presents a set of tasks and exercises for a single reading assignment, designed to take intermediate and advanced readers through the entire gamut of top-down and bottom-up reading strategies when reading nonfiction texts. The emphasis is on helping readers reflect on their "cognitive efforts in problem-solving" to improve their general reading ability and to develop problem-solving skills in general.

Reading and Writing through Neuro-Linguistic Programming
Tom Maguire (June 1996)
<http://www.aitech.ac.jp/~iteslj/Techniques/Maguire-NLP.html>

Suggestions for reading and writing activities to encourage student creativity using visualization and guided imagery are presented in this article.

Global Warming: A Cause and Effect Writing Lesson
Amy Ogasawara (November 1996)
<http://www.aitech.ac.jp/~iteslj/indexPrev96.html>

This is a lesson plan to practice cause and effect writing skills, using environmental topics as an example, in which students are given several articles about global warming and note-taking worksheet to help them identify key points and all causes and effects in the articles. The notes are then used for writing cause and effect essays on the topic.

The Love Clinic: Using Advice Columns in the Classroom
Richard Humphries (February 1997)
<http://www.aitech.ac.jp/~iteslj/Lessons/Humphries-LoveClinic.html>

This is a combination reading, discussion and role-playing activity designed around newspaper advice columns. It includes a clear description of how to carry out the activity, and suggestions for raising cultural awareness through the materials chosen and the discussions and role plays based on them.

Is the Movie the Same as the Book?
Donna Hurst Tatsuki (February 1997)
<http://www.aitech.ac.jp/~iteslj/Lessons/Tatsuki-Movie.html>

This activity describes how to prepare lessons comparing passages in a book and corresponding scenes in a movie based on them. It encourages close reading of a text and critical examination of both the text and the movie scene, and provides the basis for further individual or group projects.

Student Created Crossword Puzzle Exercise
Greg Goodmacher (December 1997)
<http://www.aitech.ac.jp/~iteslj/Lessons/Goodmacher-Crosswords/>

As the title indicates, this article contains tips on how to help students review vocabulary by making their own crossword puzzles. It includes a grid which can be used as a template for making crossword puzzles.

Computers, E-mail, and the Internet

Secret Partner Journals for Motivation, Fluency and Fun
Timothy Stewart (July 1996)
<http://www.aitech.ac.jp/~iteslj/Techniques/Stewart-SecretJournals.html>

This is a variation on student journaling that has students write to many different people while remaining anonymous.

Getting Your Class Connected
Dennis E. Wilkinson (September 1996)
<http://www.aitech.ac.jp/~iteslj/Techniques/Wilkinson-Connected.html#ENC>

The short selection found here offers ideas on using e-mail and elementary HTML for teaching, links, and suggestions for encouraging learners.

Marking Student Work on the Computer
Martin Holmes (September 1996)
<http://www.aitech.ac.jp/~iteslj/Articles/Holmes-ComputerMarking/index.htm>

This article describes how student papers can be marked using MS Word 7 or Word Perfect 6.1 using macros and templates designed by the author, and discusses advantages and disadvantages of this method. The article includes links which the reader can use to download the macros and templates.

Using Microsoft Word to Generate Computerized Tests
Frank Tuzi (November 1997)
<http://www.aitech.ac.jp/~iteslj/Articles/Tuzi-Tests/>

After acknowledging the benefits of computer-based testing but also pointing out some of the drawbacks of using internet-based tests, the author shows how macros and forms in the MS Word environment can be used for creating and using computerized practice and testing materials that can be used offline. Instructions and examples are clear, and, while there is certainly a learning curve involved, anyone using them should be able to write their own computerized tests in a relatively short time

E-mail Activities in the ESL Writing Class
Ron Belisle (December 1996)
<http://www.aitech.ac.jp/~iteslj/Articles/Belisle-Email.html>

In this collection of e-mail activities, the author discusses the numerous advantages that using e-mail has for language learners and their teachers, followed by suggestions/instructions for different e-mail assignments and activities.

Report on a Penpal Project, and Tips for Penpal-Project Success
Vera Mello (January 1998)
<http://www.aitech.ac.jp/~iteslj/Techniques/Mello-Penpal.html>

A Brazilian English teacher's experiences in setting up and administering an e-mail pen pal project are described in this article.

Thriving on Screen: Web-Authoring for L2 Instruction
Jack Kimball (February 1998)
<http://www.aitech.ac.jp/~iteslj/Articles/Kimball-WebAuthoring.html>

The great potential that the WWW offers, and how teachers and students can benefit from it and, in turn, further increase its potential engaging in their own web-authoring, are discussed in this article. Links are included.

Let the E-mail Software Do the Work: Time Saving Features for the Writing Teacher
Ron Belisle (April 1998)
<http://www.aitech.ac.jp/~iteslj/Techniques/Belisle-Email/>

This article explains how to obtain, install, and set up the free e-mail program, Eudora Light, to make use of its time saving features as part of an e-mail based writing program.

Activities for Using Junk Email in the ESL/EFL Classroom
Michael Ivy (May 1998)
<http://www.aitech.ac.jp/~iteslj/Techniques/Ivy-JunkMail/>

Turning junk e-mail into language treasure can be done by using the suggestions and the six activities described in this article.

Jigsaw and Cloze Activities

Making Jigsaw Activities Using Newspaper Articles
David Dycus (February 1996)
<http://www.aitech.ac.jp/~iteslj/Techniques/Dycus-Jigsaw.html>

This article describes how newspaper articles can easily be turned into jigsaw reading activities that involve listening and speaking as well as reading.

Graffiti for ESL Readers
Brent Buhler (September 1996)
<http://www.aitech.ac.jp/~iteslj/Techniques/Buhler-ContentBased.html>

This teaching technique article presents a type of jigsaw reading activity in which small

sections of larger articles are copied onto 11 by 17 one-column pages and taped to the walls. Students, who can start anywhere in the article, develop dialog among themselves and with the text as they work through it.

Less Is More: Summary Writing and Sentence Structure in the Advanced ESL Classroom
George L. Greaney (September 1997)
<http://www.aitech.ac.jp/~iteslj/Techniques/Greaney-Writing.html>

The activity here is designed to encourage advanced students who habitually write short, simple sentences to use more complex sentence structure spontaneously in their writing. It involves each student in summarizing a short passage and then challenges the class to reduce the summaries into a single, comprehensive sentence.

A Fun Reading Comprehension Activity
Mehmet Ali Akgün (October 1997)
<http://www.aitech.ac.jp/~iteslj/Lessons/Akgun-ReadingComp.html>

This short article describes a reading activity which offers an interesting variation on the average cloze exercise. A text is typed in a thin column, leaving a large margin on both sides. Students cut a line through the column of text so that the last one or two words are cut off and then must work to reconstruct the text by supplying the missing words.

Read Aloud and Spot the Differences
Greg Goodmacher (November 1997)
<http://www.aitech.ac.jp/~iteslj/Lessons/Goodmacher-ReadAloud.html>

In this activity, students are given slightly different texts which they read aloud to each other and try to find the differences.

FLL N-SIG News

Report on the Robert Kaplan Workshop

by Denise Douglas-Brown

On Saturday 6th June, Professor Robert B. Kaplan gave a 3-hour workshop on contrastive rhetoric at the University of Library and Information Science, Tsukuba. The workshop was jointly hosted by the FL Literacy N-SIG of JALT and the Ibaraki chapter of JALT. Dr. Kaplan is a distinguished rhetorician who is noted for his many contributions to the field of contrastive rhetoric.

'Contrastive rhetoric' may be said to be the comparison of literacy standards across cultures. Dr. Kaplan's work has been evolving since the mid-1960s in the form of numerous articles, and has culminated in the publication of his recent book *The Theory and Practice of Writing* (W. Grabe and R.B. Kaplan, Longman, 1996). During the workshop, Professor Kaplan addressed diverse themes such as the purpose of writing (i.e. to convey information by 'telling' or by 'transforming' knowledge); the focus of writing (i.e. the structure and style of a text rather than the 'grammar' of a text); the rationality of writing (i.e., that 'logic' is culturally-coded); and the co-construction of texts (i.e., that 'meaning' is 'negotiated' between writer and reader). His comprehensive message was that a nation's 'literacy' can never be considered in isolation; it is the product of culture and history and tradition, and hence directly mirrors the values of a particular speech community. With this insight, we can perhaps all be better teachers of cross-cultural writing (i.e., how to write in 'English' or 'Japanese' or 'other' rhetorical styles, depending on the target audience). All in all, it was a very engaging and informative presentation.

Announcing Our New Reviews Editor

Beginning in Fall 1998, Bern Mulvey will become editor of *Literacy Across Cultures* book and teaching material review section. We are looking for reviews of any books related to literacy issues in and out of the classroom, and especially books and textbooks and/or teaching materials with a connection to teaching L2 reading and/or writing skills. Both members and non-members of the Foreign Language Literacy N-SIG are welcome to contribute reviews. Anyone interested in becoming a contributor to this section should contact the new editor privately at the address listed below for more information.

Bern Mulvey
Assistant Professor, Literature
Fukui University
Bunkyo 3-chome 9-1
Fukui 910-0017, JAPAN
Fax: 0776-27-8521
E-mail: *mulvey@edu01.f-edu.fukui-u.ac.jp*

Are you a JALT member? Then join us!

The Foreign Language Literacy National Special Interest Group continues to grow, and with your help we can soon have the 50 members we need to be fully recognized by JALT. If you are a JALT member and have an interest in some facet of reading, writing and/or literacy, please join us!

JALT members can join the FLL N-SIG by sending ¥1500 to the JALT Central Office using the postal money transfer (*yubin furikae*) form included in issues of *The Language Teacher*. On the line labeled "N-SIGs", write "FLL N-SIG (forming)." There is no need to renew your membership each year **until** we reach 50 or more members, so please consider joining today.

Not a JALT member? There is still a place for you!

Only JALT members can become ***members*** of the FLL N-SIG. However, this does not mean that you cannot contribute to our activities. At present, non-members in any country can receive copies of our publication, ***Literacy Across Cultures***, and are encouraged to contribute articles, reviews, and perspective pieces to it. In addition, we are sending this newsletter out in an e-mail version, which you can receive by contacting Charles Jannuzi at <*jannuzi@ edu01.f-edu. fukui-u.ac.jp*>. To obtain a printed version, contact David Dycus by e-mail at <*dcdycus@ asu.aasa.ac.jp*> or <*dcdycus@japan-net.or. jp*> or at the address in the "Officers and Contact Information" section.

Call for Submissions

Literacy Across Cultures, a publication of JALT's Foreign Language Literacy N-SIG, welcomes submissions, in English or Japanese, on topics related to reading and writing and their social product, literacy. We invite any interested person to submit:

- articles (up to 3000 words, not heavily referenced)
- perspective/opinion pieces
- book and article reviews
- annotated bibliographies
- responses to ***LAC*** articles
- descriptions/reviews of literacy-related World Wide Web sites and materials
- classroom and teaching tips

for upcoming issues. In addition, we welcome annotated bibliographies and other collections of information on topics related to literacy, both for ***LAC*** and for our WWW site.

Literacy Across Cultures is published twice a year, in February, and September. Submissions for a given issue must be received by the 10th of January and August respectively. We encourage relevant submissions that may not fit into any of the categories above.

Submissions can be made in three ways:

1) As attachments to an e-mail message to the editor. The text should be provided twice, once in a Text file (.TXT) format and once in a Rich Text Format (.RTF). The e-mail message should include a message to the editor explaining the content of the submission and a short personal biography to accompany the submission if accepted. The message should include information about what computer OS was used (Mac or IBM) and what word processor was used, including the version number of that software. If possible, an additional version saved in a Word Perfect format (ver. 5.2 to 7.0) is appreciated. It should be sent to David Dycus, the ***LAC*** editor, at <*dcdycus@asu.aasa.ac.jp*>, with a copy (CC) sent to <dcdycus@ japan-net.or.jp>.

2) On a 1.44 mb floppy disk accompanied by a printed version of the submission. The text on the floppy disk must be provided in 2 formats, once in a Text file (.TXT) format and once in a Rich Text Format (.RTF). If possible, a version saved in a Word Perfect format (version 5.2 to 7.0) is appreciated. A short personal biography should accompany the submission. (See the address below.)

3) If the author does not have access to a computer, two typed, double-spaced copies of the text and any accompanying tables, graphics, etc. can be sent to the address below.

If the document includes graphics, tables, drawings, etc., they should be save as separate files on the floppy disk or sent as separate e-mail attachments, in one of these formats: .JPG, .BMP, .GIF, .PCX, or .WPG. A printed copy should also be included.

Printed submissions should be sent to:
David Dycus
Aichi Shukutoku University
9 Katahira, Nagakute, Nagakute-cho,
Aichi-gun, Aichi-ken 480-11 JAPAN.
FAX at 0568-85-2560 (outside of Japan, that is 81-568-85-2560). (Please do not fax submissions.)